THE DISGUISE THEME IN THE MIDDLE ENGLISH METRICAL ROMANCES: ITS USE, ORIGINS AND INFLUENCE

Submitted for the M.Phil. degree by

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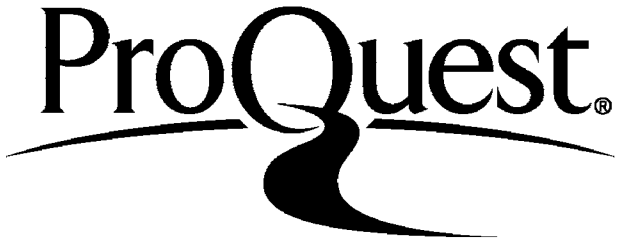

ABSTRACT

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The romances dealt with in Part I were written between 1225 and approximately 1500. They are examined from individual texts to show what functions the theme of disguise performed within the narrative, and what literary and moral concerns they reflect in English authors.

The discussion, divided under headings, examines the educative use of disguise, disguise used to determine and alter the nature of society, and episodes of individuals concealing their identity in order to prove themselves. Following sections deal with the comic use of disguise, with disguise episodes which contain social comment, with disguise symbolising the inner state of the individual, and with romances whose central concern is identity. Finally, there is an examination of the few examples where disguise features as a stock literary convention.

Disguise, in these romances, is defined as the assumption of alien dress, and also the witholding, sometimes unintentional, of identity.

Part II looks at some sources of disguise themes in legends, popular tales and monastic writings, also at some themes having their origins in myth and ritual. This part finally deals with apparent

literary conventions of disguise which are, however, found commonly used in contemporary social life.

Part III assesses the later social and literary influence of the disguise theme. Chapter 6 examines its political use as gaining monarchical prestige and national unity, discusses its influence upon the changing form of the tournament, and traces its contribution to the development of the masque. The final chapter examines its use in the secular drama evolving contemporaneously with the masque, the Moral Interlude. Techniques of disguise, soon to become important in the Elizabethan period of high drama, were shared by writers of romance and interlude alike. Tudor dramatists, borrowing in other respects from romances, betray a similar debt in their use of the romance disguise theme.

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PART I

THE USE OF THE DISGUISE THEME IN THE MIDDLE ENGLISH METRICAL ROMANCES

CHAPTER I

LITERARY USES AND TECHNIQUES.

This chapter attempts to examine the use of disguise, a literary theme in the romances, as something other than a stock ingredient of the genre, derived from earlier narrative sources, and repeated with little significance or variation, - as something more than a literary fossil. In order to make an examination in detail, individual romances are discussed under headings which denote a grouping of six different uses of the theme. Each group covers a wide concern, and individual romances relate to the group, in their use of disguise, in a variety of ways. Some romances have been discussed under more than one heading where the disguise theme has a multiple function.

The first section deals with the educative use of disguise in which the theme is a means to discussing or discovering the nature of love, society and of self. This is followed by sections dealing with the comic use of disguise and with social comment in the context of disguise. Romances which depict a disguised life as a symbol of the inner state, and romances which pivot upon unknown identity, using disguise as a central theme, are examined in the fourth and fifth sections.

The sixth and last section deals with romances which do use the disguise theme in a superficial and stereotyped manner, transferring hardly material directly from earlier romances and developing the possibilities of the theme. These poems are few in number and serve to

emphasise, by their lifelessness, the imaginative and various use of the theme in romances grouped in earlier sections. There is evidence to show that poets were conscious of, and tried to ameliorate, the monotony of this kind of use of the theme.

Some English romances are compared with Anglo-Norman sources to discover whether the theme was significant enough within the narrative for the individual poet to work upon independently, either in adapting or in departing from his original material.

A detailed comparison of one English romance with another, solely in respect of the use of this theme, has been for the most part avoided, since so far from being all alike, these narratives distinguish themselves strongly from one another and require individual discussion. Where similarities have been found to occur between romances this is stated. Most discussion, however, deals with divergence and the individual approach to the theme.

a) The Educative Use of Disguise

Disguise usually has a more moral and serious purpose in romance than merely to provide amusement or diversion or simply another example of the hero's ingenuity. A large number of romances fall into a group which examines the nature of love, of society and of the individual. The disguise which tests, examines, and sometimes changes, the nature of these things is used educatively. Romances are examined under the heading of each of these groups to find out how each romance approaches the subject, what it finds and whether it differs from another romance in the same

group. Where a romance deals with more than one of the three subjects under examination, it will be dealt with under more than one heading. Some account is also given of relevant examples of English adaption of sources in the context of the educative use of disguise.

i) The Testing of Love

Just as the knight, by assay, should be seen to be knightly, so must the lover or friend be tested to be found worthy of the generous gifts of love and trust. Disguise makes assay of love by denying, initially, the outward identity of the individual and all the paraphernalia of assumed qualities which adhere to that identity, - the power of a king, for example, or the prowess of a knight, - and freeing the loved one from the obligation of responding to anything less than the central identity of the lover. The man in disguise can also, by exploiting his own apparent absence, witness the response of his mistress or friend to his reported death or jeopardy. King Horn uses this assay upon the hero's mistress; her response is in terms of her own death. Sir Orfeo has a similar test which is made upon the loyal love of a servant; the servant's loving grief is nearly as great. In Amis and Amiloun, the suggestion of violent injury performed upon one friend prompts just as great violence in the other. King Horn and Ipomadon test the love of a woman; in Ipomadon the lover is also put to the test by his own disguise, and is required to re-define his love in terms of his own society. Sir Orfeo and Amis and Amiloun deal with fidelity in non-sexual love, - the feudal love existing between a lord and his servant in the former, and the brotherly love existing between friends in the latter. Amis and Amiloun also tests the ability of love to answer the most supreme demands made upon it.

In King Horn, the hero/lover makes the initial denial early on with a disclaimer:

> **Ihc am ibore to lowe**
> **Such wimman to knowe.**
> **Ihc am icome of þralle**
> **And fundling bifalle.**
> **Ne feolle hit þe of cunde**
> **To spuse beo me bunde**
> **Hit nere no fair wedding**
> **Bitwexe a þral and a king.**
>
> **(11.417 ff.)**

Horn puts out this social objection as a test of Rymenhild's love, for he has already told her father that he comes "of gode kenne":

> **Of Christene blode**
> **And Kynges suþe gode.**
>
> **(11.176 ff.)**

The lady in this romance has partly fulfilled the demand of the hero in persisting with her love in spite of the deceptive substitution of Athulf for Horn. The force of love in Rymenhild, therefore, is exceedingly strong. But she must do yet more and help Horn to discard his thraldom and become a knight; he wishes to "wexe more" (l.440). Rymenhild, in other words, must give him the means to identify himself in terms of honour and prowess.[1] As she gives her promise to help him, she also gives him the ring and the cup which are to be the evidence of his identity later on (l.448 f.).

The possibility of a woman valuing a man not for his status, but for his own sake, is echoed symbolically during Rymenhild's wedding to King Mody. At the feast she distinguishes between the gentlefolk who drink from a horn, and the beggar, the unrecognised Horn, who is first ignored, then given a bowl. She thinks he is one thing while he is

something else: "For heo wende he were a glotoun ....." (l.1124). Horn says:

> **Þu wenest i beo a beggere,**
> **And ihc am a fissere.**
>
> **(ll.1133 f.)**

The lady redeems herself by giving the beggar a horn filled with wine, and drinking to him.

The last test develops from this. The lady recognises the ring Horn lets fall into the cup, but she is still deceived by the appearance of the man (ll.1163 ff.). Believing her lover to be absent, and the man before her to be a beggar, her love is freed from any obligation or constraint. In his disguise, Horn does not offer occasion for dissembling; he offers instead complete freedom as an assay. He says: "Horn was sik and deide" (l.1184). Rymenhild's love responds with the ultimate gesture: "To herte knif heo settes," (l.1201). In doing this, she demonstrates her value for Horn in terms of her life, both to Horn and to herself.

The Horn Childe poet gives a paler version of this episode. Horn calls out for drink, as Rimneld passes, simply to provide himself with the opportunity to leave the ring in the cup and thus make himself known. This is closer, in a romance which echoes strongly with themes from the Tristan romance, to Gottfried's poem where Tristan, disguised as a leper, importunes Isolde for alms.[2] The poet clearly approves of the love of these two and makes a direct comparison between it and the love of Horn and Rimneld:

> **Loued neuer childer mare**
> **Bot tristrem or ysond it ware,**
>
> **(ll.310 f.)**

The Horn Childe poet also omits the hero's temporary deception of Rymenhild; but he does reinforce Horn's plea for drink by naming her love:

> **For hornnes loue y pray þe,**
> **Go nou3t, ar þif drunken be,**
> **3if euer he was þe dere.**
> **(11.998 ff.)**

Rimneld responds as Rymenhild does, but not out of educated generosity. She gives because she recognises Horn. Similarly, Isolde is not accustomed to giving to lepers or the poor, as Brengvein notes in the Gottfried version.[3] Her gift, the ring, only indicates her recognition of him. Genuine instances of generosity prompted by the love of the hero occur in Sir Beues and Guy of Warwick; they combine the elements in King Horn and Horn Childe.[4]

The examination of Rymenhild's love finds her lacking but a little. Ipomadon's heroine, however, passes her first test, only to be found wanting later on. The poem has important reservations about reputation and delusory appearance, and begins with an interesting volte face.

Ipomadon has fallen in love with La Fiere's repute as a beauty. He, however, presents himself at her court incognito, that is, without repute. Moreover, he refuses to build fame for himself, declining to join in chivalric pursuits and gaining instead a name for cowardice. He does not claim the name of knight, but calls himself the "stravnge valete". La Fiere requests his name, and responds in noble fashion to his refusal:

> **"Syn thou to seruys will be sett,**
> **What ys thy name, þou stravnge valete,**
> **Anon that thou tell mee! "**

"I was callyd at home by the same name,
And borne I was in ferre contre:
Forther wotte ye not for me,
Wheddyr ye blysse or blame! "
She sayd: "Sone, this holde I good inowe,
It is a noble name,
And thou artte welcome securly! "
(11.430 ff.)

Later, when Ipomadon gives his mantle to the butler, La Fiere says to her attendants:

This chylde is comyn of gentille blode,
It may no nother weye bee!
(11.501 f.)

La Fiere's love has begun propitiously. She has, however, vowed to marry none other than the best knight in the world. As three years go by, she recognises that she loves the "stravnge valete", but cannot accept his apparent want of courage. (11.911 ff.). Ipomadon, debating this within himself (11.1061 ff.), concludes that his love for her compels a respect for her vow and cannot be reconciled to a lack of deeds. He is forced out of her court by his own need to prove himself. The lady's love, when tested, is found to incorporate a principle which reduces the hero's resistance to social convention and prompts him to deeds which raise him above the level of other men. Ipomadon finds, through her love, that reputation is not necessarily won by a name; nor can reputation be avoided by disowning one.

Much comment on the romances deals with love exclusively in terms of sexual love, ignoring the broader definition available in the romances themselves, which examine the whole spectrum of relationships ranging from maternal devotion to friendship.

Sir Orfeo, through an assay-by-disguise, discusses the inner workings of the feudal relationship between a king and his servant. Bliss suggests that the third section of the poem, in which Orfeo is

welcomed by the Steward, is largely a matter of structural balance and suspense.[5] But this poem could arguably be seen as a work dealing with an aspect of love, namely fidelity.[6] The king demonstrates his loyal love to his queen; when he returns, he tests a similar quality in his chief servant. This is psychological rather than structural balance, for the king's life exists in terms of its chiefest possessions, - his wife and the willing love of his subjects.

First he comes to his own court, having adopted an appearance at the furthest remove from that of a king. The people of the town stare and are aghast at him (ll.502 ff.). In this disguise he tests the breadth of the Steward's love by claiming to be one of the king's kind: "Icham an harpour of heþenisse." (l.513). The Steward makes a response through the loving memory of his lord:

> **Euerich gode harpour is welcom me to**
> **For mi lordes loue, Sir Orfeo.**
> **(ll.518 f.)**

Next he suggests, as Horn does to Rymenhild, that the King is dead. The Steward, now released from all feudal duty, deeply laments his lord's death and swoons. The poet comments:

> **King Orfeo knewe wele bi þan**
> **His steward was a trewe man**
> **& loued him as he au3t to do,**
> **(ll.553 ff.)**

Orfeo's hypothetical case, "3if ich were Orfeo þe king. . ." (ll.558 ff.), rather than adding to the suspense, as has been suggested,[7] emphasises the sacrifices the king has made for his queen by carefully enumerating them, and describes the loyalty of the Steward to his lord; he then measures that loyalty by naming its reward:

> **Sikerlich, for loue or ay,**
> **Þou schust be king after mi day;**
> **(ll. 571 f.)**

Briefly he puts the case where love had been found wanting:

> **& 3if þou of mi deþ hadest ben bliþe**
> **Þou schust haue voided, al-so swiþe.**
> **(11.573 f.)**

Feudal allegiance, the Orfeo poet is saying, springs ideally from love rather than from duty. The trust and generosity of a feudal lord must stand on an assurance of the disinterested fidelity of his servants. The parallel loves of the King and Eurodis, and the King and the Steward, suggest that the Steward episode, rather than functioning as an appendix to a poem about the separation and re-union of lovers, proposes that the importance of feudal love is as great as that of sexual love.

In Amis and Amiloun, the love of friends is assayed with an example of existing devotion before it. In this case there is no reward, only the burden of an additional obligation.

Amiloun, having become a leper, visits the court of Amis, his sworn friend, forsaken by all save his nephew, Amourant.[8] He is confident that Amis, of gentle heart (l.1870), will afford him food and warmth, but he forbids the boy to reveal his name or history (l.1876). Duke Amis remarks upon the mutual devotion shown by the leper and the boy; he promises that, for the sake of the true friendship Amourant bears his master, he will help them (l.1992 ff.). Like Rymenhild, La Fiere and Orfeo's Steward, his first act towards the strangers is one of spontaneous generosity. The heart capable of a noble love must show breadth and compassion.

However, when he suspects the leper to have stolen Amiloun's cup

and to have killed Amiloun, Amis' generosity and tender love turn to ferocity; as he flings himself upon the leper and belabours him with stick and sword, the poet does not fail to make the point, in Amourant's protests, that he heaps blows upon the gentle friend who once helped him in his greatest need (ll.2107 ff.). Disguise has found out the savagery that exists within love, and has directed it against the one most deserving of love's tenderness.

The antithesis of this, the love which is as enduring and unchanging as it is deep, is found in the unrecognised nephew, Amourant. The English redactor of the Anglo-Norman version, Amis e Amilun, makes much of this, for the boy's name is originally Owaines (l.1625). The Anglo-Norman poet mentions (A-N. l.887) that the child is nicknamed "Amiraunt", but in the narrative he is consistently called "Owein". The English romancer enlarges this germ of significance and inserts a largely repetitive stanza at line 1632 which tells of the re-naming of the nephew on his twelfth birthday. Henceforward he is called Amourant, until his brief appearance at the end of the narrative where the English is close to the antecedent version, and the name reverts to Owaines (l.2488). Clearly the English poet was concerned to provide the boy with a name parallel to Amis and Amiloun, - a name which befits the fidelity and love he bears his uncle and lord.

Amourant it is who reveals the identity of Amiloun to Amis. Amis falls weeping upon his friend's neck and takes him to his court to care for him for a year. Disguise having found out the strength of Amis' love, recognition the pity in it, the romance brings us to the outcome and a profound truth. Amis is required to sacrifice his children in

order to restore health to his friend. The noble nature having responded rightly to love's demand, finds a yet greater demand within it.

In this romance the nature of love is discovered by putting it to the test. Disguise does this by allowing the loved one to make a response out of love while ostensibly free from constraints imposed by the lover's presence. Romance deals with many kinds of love, and is not restricted to what is traditionally held to be one of the major themes of romances, sexual love. The romances discussed here have dealt, through disguise, with the loving relationship between friends, uncle and nephew, lord and servant as well as the sexual bond between husband and wife, knight and lady. English adaption of sources shows an awareness of opportunities to explore the nature of love in non-sexual relationships. Male bonding in the romances is put to tests as searching as those to which sexual love is subjected. Aspects of love, such as fidelity, friendship, feudal duty and sacrifice, are also defined; these aspects are more strongly associated with the morality of love than with initial attraction and subsequent gratification. Expected qualities, such as courage and endurance emerge from these disguise tests; but so, too, do unexpected qualities, not always associated with love in romance, - the obduracy of Ipomadon, for example, or the brutality of Amis. Disguise itself, like that of Ipomadon or Horn, used as a means to the truth via deception, holds a profoundly valid symbol of the nature of love.

ii) The Nature of Society

The problem of where a man stands in relation to society has two main aspects in romance. The first is to what extent the individual, be he a king or less, can influence or change the nature of society. The extent of this influence and how it is brought to bear by means of disguise is examined in The Tale of Beryn and Havelok the Dane. The second, more complex, deals with the effect of society on the individual, - whether it is sufficiently adjusted to him, or whether it makes demands which are beyond his human scope to answer adequately. Where these aspects are examined in the context of disguise, the individual is allowed to side-step the rôle which society has prescribed for him. This happens in Ipomadon. In Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, pressure of circumstances forces the individual to relinquish that rôle.

The Tale of Beryn is about moral society. Falsetown has no effective ruler save a corrupt court, and no chivalric order of knights; only a pack of dishonest citizens. The society which the hero encounters is simply a fraudulent one. The central figure of the tale is the young man Beryn, who is driven to Falsetown by a storm, and is made the dupe of the inhabitants. He loses a game of chess and is obliged to drink all the salt water in the sea, or give up his ships; a merchant offers five shiploads of goods in exchange for his cargo, but removes the goods before Beryn can take them; he is accused of having stolen a blind man's eyes; damages are demanded from him for having deserted a woman of the town; and a rascal, Macaigne, sells him a knife and then accuses him of having murdered his father with it.

The unlikely hero-in-disguise is one hundred-year-old Geffrey, a Roman exile posing for safety as a crippled beggar. His self-appointed task is to reform the society of Falsetown by restoring justice to Beryn. He does this by assuming yet another disguise, - that of a fool. He instructs Beryn:

> **"Getith a peir sisours, sherith my berd anoon;**
> **And aftirward lete top my hede, hastlych and blyve."**
> **Som went to with sesours, som with a knyfe;**
> **So what for sorowe and hast, and for lewd tole,**
> **There was no man alyve bet like to a fole**
> **Then Geffrey was. . . . . .**
> **(11.2916 ff.)**

Enid Welsford's definition of the fool exactly fits the situation in this romance. She says:

> **. . . and the Fool of course represents the cause of the stupid against the clever, of the weak against the strong . . . belongs to the party of the Injured Innocents . . . Every man, therefore, is prepared to identify himself with the Fool as he . . . assumes the most effective of all rôles, the rôle of David against Goliath.**[9]

The wicked society takes Geffrey to be what he appears to be. There is no provocation to outwit a fool; and they relax their vigilance in their enjoyment of the fool's behaviour while he prepares to educate them by their own methods:

> **Hanybald of his wordis hertlich lou3e,**
> **And so did al þat herd hym, as þey mi3te wele,**
> **And had grete ioy with hym for to telle,**
> **For þey knewe hym noon othir but a fole of kynde;**
> **And al was his discrecioune; and þat previd þe ende.**
> **(11.2964 ff.)**

Geffrey has dressed and spoken as a fool in order to teach wisdom. He does not defend the charges against Beryn; instead he confesses. But he demands that the water from the rivers should be

separated from the salt water before Beryn drinks; he looses two butterflies in the merchant's house and asks for five shiploads of these; he proves that the blind man changed his bad eyes for Beryn's good ones; he suggests that the woman follows Beryn to Rome to live with him as his wife; and he claims that Beryn took the knife from the heart of Macaigne's father and discovered the murderer when Macaigne claimed it. Geffrey has educated a corrupt society by adopting the disguise of one who is least able to know the good society from the bad.

This is an example of ingenium or engin, very often closely associated with the educative use of disguise. A wide range of meaning attaches to the term, but generally it refers to a conscious use of shrewdness and deception as over against the fortuitous development of circumstances which are not necessarily in the control of the protagonist, but which work to his ends. R. Hanning's comment that it is "the virtue par excellence of fallen man ..... more knowing as a result of that experience" accords well with the evidence in disguise romances.[10]

Engin is also present in the romance of Havelok; but here it is only one of the qualities which support the just claims of a man fit to be king. For Havelok demonstrates the relationship between a people and its monarch. As in the Tale of Beryn, wickedness must be replaced by worthiness; and before the hero ever appears we have a clear picture of beneficent kingship and its antithesis, tyranny. England, under Goldboru's father, Apelwold, is lawful, prosperous, God-fearing and loyal (11.27-105); under his successor, Earl Godrich,

the people are heavily policed, subject to extortion and go in fear (ll.260-280). The poet duplicates this contrast in the second introduction to the poem: Havelok's father, Birkabeyn, and his successor, Godard, are the counterparts in Denmark of the two English kings (ll.337-357, 408-446). Havelok, in disguise, demonstrates how the bad can be defeated and the good restored.

Initially, Havelok does not take on a disguise; circumstances force poor living and mundane work upon him. His outstanding personal qualities, though, are all the more apparent. He is meek and cheerful (ll.945 f.), he has great physical beauty (ll.972 f.), he has innate strength and skills (ll.1041 ff.) and he attracts to himself the respect of the people he will one day rule:

> **Ful sone it was ful loude kid**
> **Of Hauelok, hw he warp þe ston**
> **Ouer þe laddes euerilkon;**
> **Hw he was fayr, hw he was long,**
> **Hw he was with, hw he was strong;**
> **(ll.1060 ff.)**

Supernatural manifestation of kingship is very important in this poem dealing with identity. Ordinary men and women are given a token which compels spiritual as well as personal loyalty as they see the brilliant light shown to Grim and his wife (ll.588 ff.), to Goldboru (ll.1251 ff.) and to Ubbe (ll.2110 ff.); the shoulder-cross is also manifested (ll.2137 ff. and 1251 ff.). By these means Havelok is known for a king by his people. Godrich, however, is not alerted. He does not know what Havelok is about to demonstrate, that kingly qualities born within the man make a stronger claim than the possession of a crown. He is assured that the youth is no more than

"sum cherles sone" (l.1092).

When the time comes for Havelok to claim his kingdom in Denmark, he slips into the country as a pedlar, thus avoiding the suspicion of Godard. Again he draws men to him in spite of his appearance:

> **Betere semede him to bere**
> **Helm on heued, sheld and spere,**
> **Þanne to beye and selle ware,**
> **(11.1652 ff.)**

Within a fortnight he has the allegiance of all the Danes without Godard's knowledge. Caught unawares, Godard is deserted by his men and is soon dispatched. Godrich, in England, is defeated in single combat by Havelok fighting as the true Queen's consort; he is then shamed, "His hand ofplat", and sent to Goldboru, (11.2754 ff.).

In Havelok, the good and ills of a society are seen very much in terms of the individual, for example, in Aþelwold and Godrich, Birkabeyn and Godard. This does not hold true of the Tale of Beryn, a much later romance, but it would apply to most thirteenth and fourteenth century romances. It is certainly true of Sir Orfeo. The relationship between the king and his Steward has been dealt with in another context, but it is worth looking at again in order to stress the wider implications of the essay.

The personal love between the two men parallels the love of the king and the queen, but the male relationship is a feudal one. The question being asked, it seems, is whether allegiance to a lord springs more from obligation than from love. When Orfeo quits the

kingdom he consigns his realm and his affairs officially to his Steward:

> **Ich ordainy min hei3e steward**
> **To wite mi kingdom afterward;**
>
> **(11.205 f.)**

He instructs him to make a parliament and to choose a new king (11.216 f.). Thus although relinquishing sovereignty, Orfeo departs in feudal terms. On his return,Orfeo tests the Steward by claiming no relationship with him and by placing himself at the lowest possible level of society. When tested, the bond of allegiance goes so deep in the servant that he is grief-stricken at a report of the king's death:

> **Allas! wreche, what schal y do**
> **Þat haue swiche a lord y-lore?**
>
> **(11. 544f.)**

The king is now assured that the Steward loves him as he ought to do. But there has already been evidence of this in the Steward's willing welcome of a poor harper, "For mi lordes loue," (1.518); and this act also suggests that perfect allegiance in love to a lord extends to other subjects in the realm. The extension is reinforced later when the joy the Steward displays at his recognition of the king is taken up by the lords of the court:

> **& al þai seyd at o criing:**
> **'3e beþ our lord, Sir,& our king! '**
> **Glad þai were of his liue;**
>
> **(11.581 ff.)**

The spare style of the poem and the highly emotional approach to the matter tempt the reader to associate some episodes in the narrative with the parables: the Steward episode clearly echoes with the parable of the Faithful Servant, and might suggest that the poet is saying something about the rewarding, by God, of a man of good life.[11] It can be argued more strongly, though, with the evidence

above, that the poem is speaking of the relationship of a servant to his earthly lord and of the part it plays in a feudal kingdom rather than a heavenly one.

The three romances discussed deal broadly with the influence of individuals within a society. Two other complex romances, Ipomadon and Sir Gawain, use disguise to explore the possibilities of the situation when it is seen in reverse. To what extent, they seem to be asking, is the individual willing or able to be defined purely socially, that is, in terms of a chivalric code, and how far does he have to compromise with society or with himself in order to survive as an individual?

Ipomadon begins with a man who deliberately sets a gap between appearance and reality in that most testing of environments, courtly society. As Havelok, Orfeo and Geffrey demonstrate, to do this in a normal environment involves risk, but can prompt kindliness, welcome, at worst space for manoeuvre, from others. But to do so at court invites that most damning of aristocratic judgments, the laughter of scorn. As the son of a king, Ipomadon has the right social credentials for paying court to La Fiere. But he increases his own task by placing himself on a low level of social acceptance, and by refusing to conform to the courtly definition of individual worth, prowess. The man questions the limits set upon his personal identity by a social convention as he elects to remain outside that convention altogether. He hazards his love by testing to see if La Fiere and society will accept him before they acclaim him. The answer, partially, is yes; La Fiere cannot help but love him (ll.911 ff.). But society's demands in the form of the lady's ideals prescribe

acclaim before commitment. Ipomadon cannot behave entirely as an individual once his life includes feelings for another individual, and this, La Fiere teaches him (to her own pain) is where society has its beginnings. Ipomadon accedes to the lady's demand that he prove himself in terms of prowess, because he acknowledges the validity of her vow (ll.1061 ff.); but he compromises again. Acclaim seldom attaches to the nameless. Thus Ipomadon goes forth as "the worthy knyghte þat had no name" (l.1749).

The hero travels all over Europe acquitting himself as the best of knights. But when he returns to Meleager's court, as La Fiere's marriage is about to be decided by tournament, he does not proclaim his achievements. He does come exceedingly richly to court, but his behaviour is foppish, and he claims that least useful of courtly positions, the queen's "dru", - socially above, yet in terms of identity, less even than the "stravnge valete", his first disguise:

> **And also, syr, I say to you**
> **I wille be callyd the quenes dru,**
>
> **(ll.2738 f.)**

The "dru" is not a candidate for the tournament, but he does take part, with ostentatious enthusiasm and much success, in the hunt. Thus by absenting himself on the three days of the tournament on the pretext of indulging his passion for the chase, he gives himself the opportunity for attending and winning the jousts in triple disguise as the red, black and white knights (ll.3057 ff.). There is a similar episode in Sir Gawain where Bertilak hunts on three days while Gawain is tested by the Lady, and many critics have taken this to be a comment on the nature of the encounters in Gawain's chamber.[12] Similarly, Ipomadon, who seems by his actions to provide

continuous comment on the courtly society, could be taken as fixing the worth of one aristocratic pursuit by its comparability with another. Certainly, by leaving immediately and having his spoils conveyed as gifts to the court by a burgess, with a message that they are from the queen's "dru", the hero seems to be saying that the episode has done less than satisfy him in his appraisal of himself, and that his own definition of worth is larger and incorporates more demands than society's definition. The poet says:

> **There is but fewe knyghttes now,**
> **That had done so mekyll, I trowe,**
> **Be god and my lewtee,**
> **That fro so grette price wold have gone,**
> **So well as myghte Ipomadon**
> **Have had that bright off ble;**
>
> **(11.5092 ff.)**

Upon his father's death, Ipomadon becomes king of Apulia, but also hears that La Fiere, beleaguered by the grotesque Lyolyne, is in need of a champion. The hero, now the pinnacle of courtly society, adopts the disguise of one who does not even qualify for inclusion, - a fool. This is Ipomadon's finest piece of engin, for while he gives the king the appearance of a fool, with his hair cut "Hye behynde & lowe before" (l.6227), he dresses the fool as a parody of a knight:

> **A blake, soty sheld he gate,**
> **VII yere before, I wott well þat,**
> **Hit had hange vp to drye;**
> **An old, rustye swerd he hadde,**
> **His spere was a plowgh gade,**
> **A full vnbryght brynie;**
> **Vpon the to legge a brokyn bote,**
> **A rente hose on the other foote,**
> **Two tatrys hanging bye.**
>
> **(11.6229 ff.)**

With his stirrups short, and his knees above his horse's mane, Ipomadon presents a truly comic figure; but he puts to La Fiere's

court the most serious test of all, and the lady herself is not excluded. If the court "thowght skorne" before at the "stravnge valete's" arrival, they are helpless with laughter now. From the moment of the fool's introduction of himself, "I am the best knyght vnder shild" (l.6283), they do not pretend to hide their enjoyment of this walking chivalric joke. What they laugh at in the fool, however, is Ipomadon's picture of their own folie.

The laughter ceases as the fool defeats Lyolyne, for Ipomadon has puzzled them all. He has arrayed himself in black so that he resembles the black-armoured Lyolyne, and nobody knows who is the victor. He then puts fear into the lady's heart as he calls up to the walls:

> **Haue done and dight you, damysell,**
> **Now maye ye se your selff full well,**
> **That Lyolyne is wyght!**
> **Wete ye well, I am hee,**
>
> **(11.8147 ff.)**

The best knight in the world masquerading as the worst knight in the world, who in turn claims to be the best knight, who pretends to be the most villainous knight, might well occasion some thoughts in the lady about what she sees and knows; for the state of Ipomadon's identity, anticipating the drama of Shakespeare in its complexity, puts the philosophical question about the truth of appearance as over against reality. If society looks only upon the outward aspect of a man, then he need only make claim to a virtue in order to possess it. La Fiere accepts Ipomadon/the fool's claim to be Lyolyne, and puts to sea in despair. Ipomadon, by his own standards still falling short of chivalric excellence, goes his way:

For euermore in his hert he thought:
'Till her vowe corde I novght,
Therefore I will wythdrawe! '

(11.8159 ff.)

The romance is resolved by the arrival of Cabanus, who challenges "Sir Lyolyne", but recognises him to be his lost brother, Ipomadon. Sir Pryncyous goes to tell La Fiere what has happened, and a harmonious and somewhat anti-climactic ending is achieved. Ipomadon, of course, has never succeeded in what he set out to do. He has not proved his worth independently of the dictates of courtly society. If he had, would that society ever have known it? He has the approval of La Fiere and her court; but he does not seem to have done enough to secure his own approval of himself. His deeds up to the point of the lady's departure have clearly not sufficed, but have left little more to do. In a conflict of absolutes Ipomadon has compromised brilliantly with society and has in turn been made to compromise. Neither has, or could, outmatch the other.

Sir Gawain is an instance of a romance in which society is put to the test by the use of disguise, but on this occasion the disguise-stratagem is used upon the hero, the individual, who embodies the finest qualities in courtly society, but is required to examine those qualities by putting them to the test in himself. Bertilak, whether he purposely assumes a disguise or whether, since there is mention of 'koyntyse of clergye' and 'craftes' (11.2445 ff.), he is a shape-shifting manifestation of Morgan's supernatural powers, deliberately initiates a game which would provoke the most courageous response from a knight who is most at one with the Arthurian concept of society; and then offers him a further game of chivalry proffering alternatives

in which there are no choices. Gawain, from the beginning, appears by all the marks of his behaviour to be the man who fits most comfortably into the dimensions of the courtly system of values. His entry into the poem is conspicuous for the system's central virtue, cortaysye: his is the perfect synthesis of aggression and refinement (ll.341-361): unlike Ipomadon, Gawain's whole purpose in being is to uphold the Arthurian code, and there is no doubt in him as to how this is to be done.

One of the unknown conditions of the challenge is, however, that the Green Knight's identity is not told until after Gawain has received the return blow; (l.2445), and it is this deception which enables Bertilak to place a test within the test, the game of exchange, which strains Gawain's human capacity for cortaysye to the point where it collapses. (ll.2358 ff.). Ipomadon, at the outset, insists that society compromise with him in order to accommodate his own human individuality. He does this by means of disguise. Sir Gawain describes the progress of an individual who behaves like the faultless component of a perfect system, but who is forced himself to accommodate his human imperfection and thus compromise the system; the Green Knight's stratagem causes the obligations inherent in cortaysye (those to a lord and host and those to a lady) to conflict, adds the psychological weight of reducing the odds against almost certain death, (as Bertilak says, "Bot þat 3e lufed your lyf. . ." (l.2368.), and the "fautlest" knight discovers that the "endeles knot" of fraunchyse, fela3schyp, clannes, pitȩ and cortaysye is untied. This is all brought about by the withholding of identity.[13] The impact of this deception and, ultimately, Gawain's discovery of it is measured in the strength of the fury which the knight turns upon himself:

> **Þenne he ka3t to þe knot, and þe kest lawse3,**
> **Brayde broþely þe belt to þe burne seluen:**
> **'Lo! þer þe falssyng, foule mot hit falle!**
> **For care of þy knokke cowardyse me ta3t**
> **To ac_orde me with couetyse, my kynde to forsake,**
> **Þat is larges and lewte þat longe3 to kny3te3.**
> **Now I am fawty and falce, and ferde haf ben euer**
> **Of trecherye and vntrawþe: boþe bityde sor3e**
> **and care . . . .**
> **(11.2376 ff.)**

Gawain's judgment upon himself is severe: he is an imperfect knight living by corruptible ideals; his own nature and the ordinary (if contrived) circumstances of life can undercut his endeavour to respond to the demands of the courtly code. He takes up the other "knot" to wear "in syngne of my surfet" (l.2433):

> **When I ride in renoun, remorde to myseluen**
> **Þe faut and þe fayntyse of þe flesche crabbed,**
> **How tender hit is to entyse teches of fylþe;**
> **(11.2434 ff.)**

Bertilak, the "outsider" in relation to Gawain's society, takes the opposite view; Gawain remains

> **On þe fautlest freke þat euer on fote 3ede;**
> **As perle bi þe quite pese is of prys more,**
> **(11.2363 f.)**

The knight returns to his society, not triumphant in his quest, but as a failure. He displays his marks of shame and confesses his blameworthiness. Society laughs:

> **Þe kyng comforte3 þe kny3t, and alle þe court als**
> **La3en loude þerat, and luflyly acorden**
> **Þat lordes and ladis þat longed to þe Table,**
> **Vche burne of þe broþerhede, a bauderyk schulde haue,**
> **(11.2513 ff.)**

Camelot will take the green girdle as a badge of honour. Whatever the interpretations put upon the enigmatic ending of the poem, disguise has forced a crisis in the most perfect knight's concept of

chivalry and the society which bases itself upon that concept is able to accommodate the outcome.

In The Tale of Beryn, the moral education of a society is brought about by the disguise of wisdom as foolishness. In Havelok, the hero is twice disguised, in the first instance, perforce, as a young man of small means; secondly, having become a leader and an avenger, he poses as an itinerant pedlar. The two societies in this romance are not educated. They have right and just rulership first wrested from them, then restored to them. The definition of worthy rulership is developed through the adventures of Havelok. Ipomadon and Gawain deal earnestly with the courtly society, and the demands of the courtly code upon the individual. The former romance proposes the case of the unwilling, unconforming knight who wishes to gain his lady by means of witty disguise rather than through his prowess. Society proves a resistant and powerful adversary which can force a compromise. Gawain, on the other hand, is the most accommodating of courtly heroes who is nevertheless unable, within his human capacity, to resolve the conflicting demands of his society. Life, in this case, forces the compromise. The poet in this romance has added yet another sophistication to the work in making the hero the victim of the disguise stratagem. These four examples suggest that, in romance, society is at least as important as the individual hero, and that the relationship between the two can work both ways, with the terms dictated sometimes by the one and sometimes by the other. Disguise is the means by which these romances discover to what extent society can influence and be influenced by the individual.

iii) The Testing of Self.

Ipomadon and Sir Gawain use disguise not only to examine the nature of society, but to examine the uniqueness of personal identity and the fragility of relationships within society. Ipomadon strongly suggests the feeling of de-personalization in the pursuit of prowess, - prowess almost a disguise itself, inexpressive of the inner, feeling self, and dangerously lacking in a sense of relationship, making, as it does, little distinction between friend and foe. It also suggests that the individual cannot make relationships unless he offers himself in part to the society which makes demands on his individuality, and that self does not exist in a vacuum, but in relation to others who form society. Sir Gawain, while it offers oblique criticism of a society based on a code of ideal conduct yet condoning, in fact, a double standard, also expresses the difficulty of the individual whose expectations of self are higher than could reasonably be asked of any human being. Thus these two important romances, searching out society through the experience of the individual, also work the process in reverse. This can be seen to take place in other romances where personal identity is discovered, changed or reinforced. The genre traditionally taken to exercise the concept of the individual concerns itself very much with relationships, - with other individuals, with society and with God; for no life can know itself without reaching out to other life. Disguise often determines the manner and extent of this commitment. The testing of self through vital relationships can be seen in the stanzaic Le Morte Arthur, in a comparison between Sir Isumbras and Sir Orfeo and in Guy of Warwick.

Le Morte Arthur contains a small episode early in the

narrative which involves Lancelot in an attempt to disguise himself at Arthur's tournament. His appearance prompts Sir Ewain to describe him as some old knight "come to see the yonge knightes ride" (l.105). This resembles the disguise of Ipomadon, - the finest exponent of chivalric prowess posing as none at all:

> **For-why wolde men Launcelot behold,**
> **And he ne wolde not himselfe show**
> **With his shouldres gan he fold**
> **And down he hanged his hed full low,**
> **As he ne might his limmes weld;**
> **Keeped he no bugle blow;**
> **Well he seemed as he were old,**
> **For-thy ne couth him no man know.**
>
> **(ll. 97 ff.)**

Sir Ewain and Arthur are watching the old knight when suddenly his horse stumbles and, with an alert and vigorous gesture, the rider catches up the reins (ll.113 ff.). Arthur recognises his knight at once; but he announces his intention of colluding with Lancelot's deception:

> **At every deede best is he,**
> **And sithe he nolde it wiste no wight,**
> **Sir Ewain, will we don him bide;**
> **He weenes that we know him nought.**
>
> **(ll.127 ff.)**

Imperfect disguise and this particular response to recognition are both extremely uncommon in romance and by themselves would be worthy of remark.[14] But placed as they are, in a narrative position of some importance, and preceding an episode where Lancelot assumes a disguise proper, (the red armour of Ascolot's son), and undetected brings Ewain, Bors and Lionel all to the ground, the two elements would be perplexing if it were not possible to see them in the light of one of the larger concerns of the poem. The theme of chivalric ideals beset by human limitations runs strongly through the Arthurian story, and in no-one is it manifested more clearly than in Lancelot

himself. The knight's early and unsuccessful disguise is a denial of what, essentially, he is; and an instinctive gesture finds him out. So the adoption of high principles, even out of the noblest intentions, denies the real nature of the man; and so, also, the strength of social ideals submits to the more urgent power of the instincts and emotions. This fundamental idea can be extended to the life of the King and beyond, to the life and ultimate disintegration of the Arthurian society. A similar analogy lies in Arthur's recognition of the knight's deception, a foreshadowing of the relationship between Lancelot, Guinevere and the King; for just as there is collusion on the King's part in the smaller issue, so there is, by so much more, in the larger and more vital situation. In both instances the attempt at disguise shows the knight that he cannot wholly conceal his true self; it also shows a king unwilling to challenge deception. Lancelot, given such licence, proves that he is the man to bring down Arthur's knights in the tournament (11.265 ff.). He is also the man to bring down Arthur's society.

Ralph Harper, in The World of the Thriller, writes:

> **Someone else may also try to wipe out the basic self . . . Even if we do not always recognise the importance of this self those who wish to make use of us do. For some men the attempt to subvert them is just enough to make them take themselves seriously for the first time.**
> **15**

This is what the romances of Sir Orfeo and Sir Isumbras share, - a relationship between the protagonist and an adversary or an agent of adversity, which causes them to re-assert or re-make the basic self. Sir Lancelot (as most other heroes of romance) adopts a disguise

which is nevertheless within his own sphere of living. What is remarkable about the heroes of these two romances is that crisis forces them to drop out of the continuum of their normal lives into a wholly different sphere. Their disguise is not, strictly speaking, a disguise, but rather a whole life into which they submerge the old identity and fashion, unrecognisably, the new. Interesting is the poet's insistence on the passing of a considerable span of time as the process takes place:

> **Sevenn yer he was smythes man ther,....**
> **(S. I. 1.404).**

and

> **Lord! who may telle þe sore**
> **Þis king sufferd ten 3er & more?**
> **(S.O. 11263 f.)**[16]

Physical deprivation is also strongly emphasised in the life of the knight working as a blacksmith's labourer:

> **And tawghte hym to bere stone**
> **Out of a fowll depe slowghe.**
>
> **There the knyghte bare stone**
> **Tyll twelve monthes wer come and gone:**
> **He wroghte his body mykyll wo.**
> **(S.I. 11.395 ff.)**

and in the solitary existence of the barefoot pilgrim, once a king:

> **In winter may he no-þing finde**
> **Bot rote, grases, & þe rinde.**
> **Al his bodi was oway duine**
> **For missays, and al to-chine.**
> **(S.O. 11.259 ff.)**

It is as though the physical identity of a man must undergo pain in metamorphosis in order to accompany the change in spiritual identity. In this respect the significance of Isumbras' work is not to be missed:

By thenne he cowthe armour dyghte,
All that fell for a knyght . . . .
(S.I. 11.406 f.)

For here the poet expresses symbolically the fashioning of a new knight. It is a painful process because it is such a profoundly serious one.

The crisis which subverts the lives of the king and the knight is the stripping away of precisely those things which gave them their first identity. In the case of Isumbras it is possessions, servants, wife and family, and sinful pride. For Orfeo it is his wife, spoken of many times in terms of his life (11.102,177,334 and 342); and his power to determine his life. All the assembled forces of a king of this world can do nothing to deflect the purpose of an Otherworld king, as is shown in the orchard (11.191 ff.).

The removal of Isumbras' pride through God's power, is accompanied by the gradual removal of proud outward appearance: his wife and children flee naked from their burning house and the knight covers them with his own mantle and surcoat (11.127 ff.). As the family takes leave of friends, the poet says:

For they bare with hem nothynge
That longed to here spendynge . . . .
(S.I. 11.151 f.).

Similarly, when Orfeo's wife is seized from him, he first relinquishes his kingdom (11.204 ff.), and then his kingly "fowe & griis":

He no hadde kirtel no hode,
Schert, no noþer gode,
Bot his harp he tok algate
& dede him barfot out atte 3ate;
(S.O. 11.229 ff.).

The two romances diverge in respect of the encounters which the knight and the king experience once new life and new appearance have been adopted. Isumbras relates to different sections of his society in turn, but on each occasion he assumes the rôle of the humble man. He labours through seven years' apprenticeship to a blacksmith (ll.406 ff.), he serves the Christian King in his battle against the heathen with no more reward than his meat and drink (ll.472 ff.), and he rests briefly in a convent for just so long as it takes to heal his battle-wounds, leaving "curteys and hende", in his "pour wedes", to take up the life of a pilgrim (ll.496 ff.). His encounters with the humbler levels of society educate his conscience. Seven more years of severe penance and itinerant hardship pass so that by the time he reaches Jerusalem where he is to be reunited with his wife, Isumbras is one "Of seke men that myghte not go,"/"And of hem that poreste wore" (ll.557 f.). He is physically reduced, morally corrected and, ultimately, reconciled with God. As if to emphasise his greater moral worthiness, his fortunes are returned in such measure that he and his sons win kingdoms for themselves.

Orfeo is also humbled, in appearance and in his poor living; and the poet contrasts the impoverished life of the king in the wilderness with his life of ease and refinement at court (ll.239-256). Unlike Isumbras, however, Orfeo retains one precious thing; it is the power which resides in his music, the strange skill which was born in him:

> **In-to alle þe wode þe soun gan schille,**
> **Þat alle þe wilde bestes þat þer beþ**
> **For ioie abouten him þai teþ,**
>
> **(ll.272 ff.).**

This power accompanies him in his single encounter with another being, the King of the Otherworld. Orfeo is not about to be corrected or re-made; his basic identity is simply making a re-statement of itself. The power of musical harmony is the symbol of that identity; and this is what he challenges the otherworldly power with. His forces have not availed him; neither will any other outward sign of kingship; he appears before the king, therefore, wholly bereft of all but his bare existence, - his only claim, the right of entry as a "pouer Menstrel" (11.429 ff.).

As a wandering harper whose physical appearance is appalling to behold, too "lene, rowe and blac" to be worthy of Eurodis (1.459), Orfeo pits his inner will and power against that of the King, and wins. The nature of the Otherworld power is changed: the court lie at his feet (11.439 ff.), the King sits passively listening (11.443 ff.) and speaks in the terms of the world of Orfeo as he asks the minstrel what reward he would have for his labour; even against his will he allows Orfeo to take what he requests. Orfeo has discovered, through crisis, that whatever is vital to his life must be fought for and won by what is essential in his nature. Continuing in his disguise, he applies the same test to his kingdom in the person of the Steward.

Orfeo and Isumbras, therefore, are forced, through crisis, to re-state or re-make themselves in order to find themselves. In his new life, Isumbras submits to hardship and humiliation in a new relationship with society; by this he is corrected. Orfeo, in an encounter with the embodiment of the adverse forces of life, dares the ultimate hazard, to win all or to lose all; in this he finds the

nature of his strength. Orfeo also finds the strength of his relationship with his kingdom. Isumbras is educated to the point where he stands in the right relationship to God.

Guy of Warwick is not unlike Sir Isumbras and Sir Orfeo insofar as the hero takes up a whole new life rather than the dress alone of another individual; but it differs in that Guy's disguise as Youn the palmer is adopted after he has become fully conscious of his true self. The description of the knight's almost mystical experience forms a bridge between the old life, the numerous adventures in battle and tournament, the betrayals and ambushes and the giants and pagans to be overcome, and the new life, the working out of a relationship with God. Extraordinarily, and with great psychological conviction, Guy's mental and physical transformation takes place without crisis. After a day of sunshine and hunting and having refreshed himself in the company of his friends, the knight goes up into a tower, gazes about him and simply realises that he exists in relation to God and has never known it until now:

Guy bethoughte him anone right
That god had him so moche honour doo
In all londes that he come to,
That he come neuere in noo fighte
Bot he was holde the best knyghte,
And neuer for his creatour,
That had doon him so grete honour.
Sore to sighe he beganne,
And in his mynde bethoughte him anone
That all his lif he wolde chaunge tho,
And in goddis seruyse he wolde him do.
(Caius.11.7398 ff.)

Guy's sin is not specific, like the pride of Isumbras; it is the general omission of God from his consciousness, the pre-occupation of self with self alone. Without God his striving for knightly

excellence has grown out of a false morality; in every act he has sinned. In the second half of the romance every act is an atonement for that sin, beginning with the casting away of knightly vanities:

> **Y schal walk for mi sinne**
> **Barfot bi doun & dale.**
> **Þat ich haue wiþ mi bodi wrou3t**
> **Wiþ mi bodi it schal be bou3t,**
> **To bote me of þat bale.**
>
> **(Auchinleck.ll.7242 ff.)**

The moral purpose of this romance is clear from the poet's introduction:

> **Therfore schulde man with gladde chere**
> **Lerne goodnesse, vndirstonde, and here:**
>
> **(C.ll.15 f.).**[17]

And the end of Guy's life, with the singing of the "Te Deum", the appearance of the angel Michael, the soul's transport to heaven and the association of miracles with Guy's goodness, is recorded entirely in terms of the knight's faith . What lies between is the evolvement of Guy's moral awareness and, in its maturity, its effect upon his life and its influence upon others. The point of maturation comes as Guy, alone in the tower, perceives the dimensions of Creation:

> **The Contree he behelde aboute farre,**
> **And the skye thikke with sterre . . . .**
>
> **(C.ll.7395 f.)**

For the first time his own stature is put into perspective in terms of moral value. The token of his deeper perception of God's generosity and inspiration in his life is the dress and conduct of a simple pilgrim. Having committed himself to this life, Guy dedicates his deeds, no less valiant than before, to the service of his Creator rather than to the service of self.

Guy's educated morality is also extended, in his new life, to

others. As Guy leaves his wife, Felice, forsaking in her all worldly things, he takes up his penance not only for himself, but also for her:

> **And of all the goodnesse that y doo shall,**
> **I graunte the euere haluendell.**
>
> **(C.11.7429 f.)**

She, in turn, for the love of Guy, gains a new knowledge of her moral self, and by the end of the narrative her goodness, charity and humility are as great, within the limits of her opportunity, as his.

Kings and friends are also influenced by Guy, the pilgrim; his identity is seldom known, however, since having left all his former pretensions behind, Guy has also left his name. The poet makes much of the recurring situation where a man in need of help complains to the pilgrim that if only he could find the great Guy of Warwick all would be well. Even between the most loyal of friends, it seems, this confusion of identity can be present, for it occurs in the complicated episode of Tirri's obligation to the cruel emperor. Earthly friendship and our knowledge of another human being, the romance seems to be saying, is uncertain.

Guy has already helped Tirri in his guise as a pilgrim by freeing him from the duke of Pavia, Otoun, and rescuing his lady from almost certain marriage to the duke. After a long separation, the two friends, this time both dressed as pilgrims, meet in Germany. At first neither Guy nor Tirri recognises his friend. Tirri's identity is revealed in his long lament over his lost glory and his present misfortune. Tirri has been released by the emperor on condition that he bring Guy as his champion to the emperor's court. He has sought his friend in many lands, but now believes him to be dead: he has been reduced to living as a "pore caytyfe" and, now

that his period of clemency is over, expects shortly to be hanged. (11.9136 ff.). In his preoccupation with his own troubles, Tirri does not ask Guy who he is. Not even Guy's offer of help and the promise that he will accompany him to the emperor's court stir the curiosity of this self-absorbed friend. Irony is increased when Berard, the emperor's steward, incensed by Guy's outspoken challenge to the court, utters the wish that he were Guy of Warwick (11.9481 ff.).

Combat is granted to Guy. His appearance startles the onlookers:

All they sware be seyn Richere
That was not the pore palmere
That toke the bateyle for to fy3te:
He semyd well a dow3ty knyght.

(C.11.9608 ff.)

Guy is the victor, to Tirri's great relief, but still the man does not recognise his old companion. He is sufficiently aware that he suspects the knight not to be the poor pilgrim, but he adds:

When I hym se I thynke on Gye:
He ys full lyke hym, securlye.
Yf Gye were not ded, I wold seye
That this were he, be thys daye.

(C.11.9712 ff.)

Even with what he thinks to be Guy's likeness before him, Tirri's knowledge of identity is unsure; he cannot even recognise the man who was his companion the day before. He heaps ingratitude upon uncertainty of vision, when Guy comes to take him to the emperor, by accusing him of betrayal. The emperor, however, restores lands and possessions to Tirri, making him his steward. Guy prepares to take his leave, but before he goes speaks in gentle tones to Tirri:

Thys is Gye that thow syeste here:
Thow owtest me to know in som manere.
Gye of Warwyke ys my name:
To tell the hyt ys no shame.

(C.11.10190 ff.)

Tirri faints at the revelation of his own blindness to his friend's identity, laments his failure and asks forgiveness. He has not learned the lesson in Guy's disguise, however, for he tries to make amends in terms of wealth, offering all his possessions to Guy. The response this time is didactically moral and quite uncompromising; Guy refuses Tirri's company and instructs him:

> **Wend thow home, as I the seye,**
> **And trewly serve thy lord to paye.**
> **Be not prowd in no manere:**
> **Help thy lord in hys mystere.**
> **Lyve in pease and not in stryfe:**
> **Dysheryt no man, be thy lyfe.**
> **Yf thow do, wyt thow well**
> **In hevyn shalt thow have no deale.**
>
> **(C. 11.10252 ff.)**

This seems to sum up the message of Guy's disguise and the whole moral intent of the romance. The wearing of this particular dress reminds Guy of his function in the scheme of God's Creation and is a mark of his acceptance of his new station, lowly in the eyes of the world, but far greater in cosmic terms; it serves also as an example of right living according to the essential nature of a servant of God, prompting others to search within themselves and, like Guy, to find a truer knowledge of inner identity.

The testing of self in these four romances involves a disguise which both betokens and compels a new relationship with individuals, with society and with God. The disguise examined in Sir Isumbras, Sir Orfeo and Guy of Warwick extends beyond the temporary assumption of false dress; the heroes of these romances take on a life-disguise in which little of the self is left which is not changed. What does remain unchanged, - the will of Orfeo, the endurance of Isumbras and the strength and valour of Guy, - is identified as the centre of self and is given new purpose and direction. The disguise of Lancelot is temporary and superficial. It is a miniature analogy, however, of the greater disguise in the knight's relationship with the King and

with the society of the King. It serves to teach that the pose will always be detected, that the self cannot be concealed.

* * * * * * * *

Disguise is used to test and explore love both within the traditional knight/lady relationship of romance and within other relationships, - man to woman, and man to man: the love of friendship and of feudal allegiance is found to be as important as sexual love. The moral nature of love, (its qualities of generosity, endurance and sacrifice, for example), is emphasised more than its sensual or "romantic" nature. The presence of antithetical elements existing side-by-side in love is also examined.

The correction of an immoral society, the restitution of right rulership to a wronged society, the definition of a feudal society and the examination of the relationship between an individual and the demands of a society upon individuality are all dealt with through the disguise theme. The moral use of power is a strong concern of the poets. So, too, is the dilemma of a man who has both a human, individual existence and a place in, and obligations to, his society. Different types of society are examined in the romances, - the courtly society, the feudal society, the kingdom beneficently and tyrannically governed, and the society without justice.

The testing of self through disguise involves the examination of one's standing with other individuals, with society and with God. Where the self has to be educated or remade, a life-disguise is taken up. The self, in one romance, is seen as the microcosm of society; the deception is temporary, but is significant of a larger life-lie.

The equation of self with knightly perfection is not the subject of these romances. Two deal with the place of self in God's Creation, or within God's intention for the individual; one deals with the unaided self challenging an unknown power to win or to lose all; and one deals literally with the concealment of self from others.

An examination of the disguise theme in the romances dealt with in this section shows that few disguise incidents are concerned wholly, or even in the greater part, with what is called "romantic" love or with war. Many deal with the individual, as is traditionally anticipated, but more deal with his relationship with women, with men to whom as a man he is linked, with the society to which he belongs, and with his consciousness of God. Few offer disguise as nothing more than a stratagem, and most use it within the context of serious moral purpose. Some romances occur under more than one heading, suggesting that disguise can have a multiple function. The differences emerging between individual romances in the use of the disguise theme, - even between romances grouped together, - suggest that the theme was not used as a stock literary device, but was used skilfully, variously and purposefully. Indications that English authors departed from sources in the use of the theme in order to reinforce its effect would endorse this argument.

b) The Comic Use of Disguise.

Disguise, even when used within the assay, gives opportunity for moments of pure comedy aside from the more serious motives which lie behind the concealment of identity. It has been seen already in the Tale of Beryn and in Ipomadon, 1. that the basic visual humour

of a man dressing-up as an unprepossessing simpleton can be exploited to the full,[2] and combined with a more sophisticated purpose, the use of a 'fool' to demonstrate the foolishness of others, can produce a rich comedy. There are other comic possibilities, outside the assay, in the pretence to another's name and identity; the disadvantage of the man who does not know who he is dealing with, the ingenious convolution of disguise within disguise, the practical conflicts between a real and an assumed rank, and even the apparent necessity to pose, temporarily, as an animal in order to survive. These types of comic situation in romance very often say less about the heroes as individuals than about human nature, clever, vulnerable and ridiculous , in general; and the poets can be seen generously to expend space and skill in expressing a broad, philosophical and un-"romantic" feeling about the comedy of life.

There exists from the beginning a faint humour in a situation where a man witholds his name and station without any anticipation, either on his own part or the narrator's, about what the outcome will be. The hazard element, which is present in all comedy, is opened up. When the man is a king reserving this vital knowledge from one of the least of his subjects, the humorous possibilities widen. This is the case in the romance of King Edward and the Shepherd.

The narrative opens with the King travelling unaccompanied by a river in May. There is no indication that he has disguised his appearance. He meets a shepherd, Adam, and they greet each other. Adam at once begins to complain that he has been overtaxed by the king. Edward sympathises and offers to put a word into the ear of his friend, the court treasurer. While the plot progresses so far, there is already humorous evidence gathering of the social inappropriateness

of the shepherd's conduct. The King greets Adam with "wordis swete" (l.20); the poet notes of Adam's response:

> **Þe schepherde louyd his hatte so well,**
> **He did hit of neuer a dele,**
> **But seid,"Sir, gud- day."**
>
> **(11.22 ff.)**

The King asks Adam a question. Adam, before he answers, turns to call in common fashion to his sheep:

> **The herd onsweryd hym ri3t no3t,**
> **But on his schepe was all his tho3t,**
> **And seid agayn, " Char, how!"**
>
> **(11.52 ff.)**

By now the king is being referred to as one who is outside the conversation (11.37 ff.). Edward takes firmer control of the situation by proclaiming himself to be a merchant (11.61 ff.), and one to whom the king's men are indebted (11.65 ff.). Having established an alliance with the shepherd, he then solicits his confidence by giving a fuller account of himself, telling a carefully selected, though accurate version of the truth:

> **My fadur was a Walsshe kni3t;**
> **Dame Isabell my modur hy3t,**
> **In þe castell was hir dwellyng,**
> **Thorow commaundement of þe Kyng;**
>
> **(11.97 ff.)**
>
> **I haue a son is with þe Whene;**
> **She louys hym well, as i wene;**
>
> **(11.109 ff.)**

3

The comic pleasure that this skilful deviation affords is enhanced when the King instructs the shepherd to come to court and to ask for him, farcically, as "Ioly Robyn" (l.124). The king has set up for himself the game he is to play with his courtiers.

Meanwhile there follows an episode, prefaced by a second allusion

to the shepherd's hat, still unremoved (l.208), in which the narrative describes with great irony how Adam feasts the King on royal game, and tells how he exchanges the proceeds from his poaching for provisions and favours, shows him a secret cellar where he keeps his wine and game, and teaches his liege lord a common drinking game. He kills a couple more rabbits for his departing guests, and sums up:

Ther is no man of þis contre,
So mycull knowes of my priuete,
Als þou dose, Ioly Robyn;

(11.515 ff.)

The final episode in the confrontation between court and country takes place on Edward's ground, with courtiers primed and the young Prince apprised of the drinking game. The shepherd arrives, painfully unfamiliar with court etiquette, and refuses to give up not only the offending hat and mittens, but also the weapon he carries:

And whan he to þe herde came,
He seide, " Al hayle, godeman:
Whider wiltow goo?"
He ȝnsweryd as he thou3t gode,
But he did not of his hode
To hym neuer þe moo:
. . . . . .
Þen ȝnswerid þat Erle balde,
"Take þe porter þi staffe to halde,
And þi mytens also! "

"Nay, felow", he seid, "so mot i the,
My staffe ne shal not goo fro me:
I wil hit kepe in my hande;
Ne my mytans getis no man
Whil þat i þaim kepe can, ...

(11.635 ff.)

He perpetrates another social blunder, when he receives his money, by offering the King a seven-shilling consideration (11.794 ff.). The King persists with the social comedy by declining gracefully and offering supper (l.803). Adam arrives at the table with staff, hood and mittens (11.857 ff and 869 ff.); this is the fourth time the

poet mentions this by now highly incongruous aspect of his appearance. The courtiers laugh, the Prince twits him about his drinking custom and, the last straw in his anger and embarrassment, he hears the court speaking in French and Latin. (11.898-1015). It is time, he thinks, to go home. The King, observing the man's distress, has him informed by the squire that he is in the presence of none other than the King and, in what remains of this unfinished poem, the shepherd asks forgiveness.[4]

This is social comedy of the least aggressive kind. The shepherd is not perceptive enough to guess the rank of the man he meets, nor is he circumspect enough to be sparing with information about his means of living. But he is by no means an "under-dog". His difficulties are justly deserved and gently resolved: the disguise-trick played upon him is prompted, initially by himself.

Rauf Coilyear is a later version of the king-in-disguise theme, and is closely related to King Edward and the Shepherd.[5] In terms of comedy, though, the later romance has two extra dimensions. The first is the strong irony laid upon the traditional tale. The King, in this case, is Charlemagne, cut off from his retinue in a blizzard, on the moors outside Paris. The landscape, with its "myrk montanis" and "fellis wyde", is strikingly redolent of the northern regions of the British Isles. The charcoal-burner, Rauf, who takes the King to his lodging, has the speech mannerisms and brusque charm also of the north. Thus his reply to the King's gracious thanks:

> **"Na! thank me not ouir airlie, for dreid that we threip,**
> **For I haue seruit the 3it of lytill thing to rufe;**
> **(11.79 f.)**

The forest laws of which Rauf complains (11.196 ff.) appear to be

English.

In the second part of the narrative, in which Rauf sets off to sell his fuel at court, he finds himself in the world of epic. He is involved in a duel with Roland; he is knighted by Charlemagne; and he is sent off to win his spurs. The third section deals, even more incongruously, with Rauf's encounter with the Saracen, Magog. There is shivering of lances, slaying of steeds and hand-to-hand combat, in all of which this charcoal-burner appears to excel. Finally, there is the conversion of Magog, and Rauf's elevation to Marshal of France. The technique of removing a culture or concept uncomfortably from its own element and exploring the resulting ironies is, in this poem, not unlike the technique of the Gawain-poet.[6]

The second extension of the comedy inherent in the traditional story is the elaborate treatment of Rauf's rustic manners. In King Edward, the shepherd is exceedingly familiar and heedless of forms of address. But his offence is limited to his speech. Rauf, on the other hand, is not only off-hand in his address, but tends also to underline his meaning with the odd blow:

> **Quhen thay came to the dure, the King begouth to stand,**
> **To put the Coil3ear in befoir, maid him to mene.**
> **He said,"thow art vncourtes, that sall I warrand! "**
> **He tyt the King by the nek, twa part in tene,**
> **"Gif thow at bidding suld be boun or obeysand,**
> **And gif thow of Courtasie couth, thow hes for3et it clene!"**
> **(11.120 ff.)**
> **7**

By dealing thus physically with the King, Rauf demonstrates that the courtly manner is not necessarily courtesy in any other sphere, and

that the occasional ready buffet can easily reverse the rôles of king and peasant. This development and refinement of the comic situation of the king-in-disguise is absent from King Edward and the Shepherd.

Comic development of the theme, in another direction, is also present in one of the versions of Octavian. In both Northern and Southern versions there is a situation where the Emperor's son, Florent, must live, through force of circumstances, as the child of the Parisian butcher Clement. Florent's predilection for courtly pursuits, and things of beauty rather than of price, suggest inborn nobility and give Clement's wife cause for thought. As Florent returns from buying a falcon instead of oxen, she muses:

> **Soche grace may God for the chylde have wroght,**
> **To a bettur man he may be broght**
> **Than he a bocher were!**
>
> **(O.N.11.706 ff.)**

and

> **Þat wyf gon þenke in her þo3t,**
> **Þe marchauntyse,**
> **Of cherles kynde was he no3t,**
> **For hys gentryse.**
>
> **(O.S.11.729 ff.)**

Up to this point the two poems are close. Here, however, they diverge. The Southern version goes on to elaborate upon Florent's "gentryse" (11.771-900); he is loved by the people (11.771 ff.); he buys a fine palfrey (11.845 ff.); he shows skill at selling hawks and hounds, and strength at wrestling and stone-casting (11.889 ff.). Clement also tells his wife how he purchased Florent as a small child (11.853 ff.). At 11.900 Florent goes to fight the Saracen giant, Guymerraunt.

After the wife's words in the Northern version, however, Florent

spends his brother's money on a "feyre stede" (11.709), and then the narrative turns to the theme of the French wars against the Sultan (11.757 ff.), with Florent determined to prove his might upon the giant Aragonour.

Clearly, the Southern version is concerned to use every means to illustrate the inexorable assertion of Florent's hidden aristocratic identity. The Northern version, on the other hand, pauses to use the comic possibilities within the situation of the youth being urged to the fight by his innate chivalric instinct, but being prepared for it by his adopted bourgeois parents and their barely adequate resources of weaponry.[8] Two stanzas of fabliau-like action describe the efforts of Clement and his wife to provide accoutrements for Florent's venture. In the first, (11.867-888) the butcher produces a "hacton", a "hawberke" - "Rowsty were the naylys all", - a shield and a spear, - "All sutty, blakk and unclene", - and a sword which has not seen the light of day for seven years. The problem of drawing such a sword from its scabbard proves difficult in the second stanza:

Clement the swyrde drawe owt wolde,
Gladwyn his wyfe schoulde the scabard holde,
And bothe faste they drowe;
When the swyrde owt glente,
Bothe to the erthe they wente:
There was game ynowe!
Clement felle to a benche so faste
That mowthe and nose all tobraste,....
(O.N.11.889 ff.)

As in Rauf Coilyear and King Edward, the juxtaposition of the unalike, with the true nature of one element undisclosed, has produced comedy. In the Northern Octavian, however, there is no rascality to repay, no lesson learned. Bourgeois endeavour is just as honest

and just as earnest as chivalric aspiration; and Florent's laughter (l.897) has a sense of this kinship in it. The butcher and his wife, though, are simply ill-equipped in terms of the heroic, and it is from this that the poet extracts his comedy.

The next two romances, Kyng Alisaunder and William of Palerne, deal humorously with the deliberate adoption of false name and/or false appearance in order to deceive. This disguise is planned and prepared for in each case. Kyng Alisaunder uses the same device twice, but with different results. On each occasion the disguise has a double aspect.

On the first occasion, King Alexander's notion is to tempt his enemy, Porus, to a battle in which the King is confident of defeating him. Porus, he has heard, is anxious to know what Alexander is like. So the king dresses himself as a chamberlain and rides to Bandas on a mule convincingly unbecoming to a King:

> **Þe kyng dude of his robe furred wiþ meneuere,**
> **And dooþ on a borel of a squyer**
> **And li3th tabard, als J fynde,**
> **And trusseþ a male hym bihynde.**
>
> **(11.5465 ff.)**
>
> . . . . . .
>
> **Alisaunder comeþ vpon his mule,**
> **Bishiten and bydagged foule,**
> **His mules sides al blody,**
> **And flyngeþ gode scour hem forby.**
>
> **(11.5475 ff.)**

Porus asks his name and business, and Alexander replies that he is a "swayn" from Greece, come as the King's chamberlain to buy urgently needed provisions in the city (11.5482 ff.). When asked about his master, he proffers a disguised portrait of the King, -the very

antithesis of the truth:

Þat he was hendy, wi3t, and gent,
And he was a litel man and an elde,
And had on at þe mete for þe chelde
Twoo þik mantels, yfurred wiþ grys.

(ll.549ϸ ff.)

Sufficiently emboldened by this picture of elderly frailty, Porus undertakes the battle and is defeated. Alexander's first ruse has succeeded.

On the second occasion, the King uses the same basic device, but with more sophisticated elaboration. His "victim", however, is even more sophisticated and places Alexander in a comically difficult situation.

Candace's son, Candulek, comes to Alexander for help in recovering his abducted wife. The King dresses himself as Antigon, the chief counsellor, and gives the royal robes to Tholomew, his servant (ll.7464 ff.). The "King" sends "Antigon" to help Candulek which he does, and Candulek is none the wiser. The King then accompanies Candulek to make the acquaintance of Candace: he still assumes the identity of Antigon. Candulek tells Tholomew that Candace will officially receive him. Tholomew is instructed to say that it is his pleasure to send his messenger Antigon:

Tholomeus 3af ansueryng
Jn þe name of þe kyng,
And seide: "J nyl nou3th comen hir ner,
Bot by a speciale messager
J wil hir sende loue-drurye,
And her estres ek aspye!"
And cleped Alisaunder " Antigon",
And bad hym wende wiþ hym onon,
And rouned wiþ hym a grete while.
Ac al þat was for gyle!.

(ll.7600 ff.)

The King is taken aback when he meets Candace; for she replies to his greetings "from the King" that she knows very well, by his face, that he is Alexander (ll.7640 ff.). The King tries a version of the tactic he used on Porus and gives a false description of Alexander:

> **Alisaunder is wel more,**
> **Redder man on visage,**
> **And sumdel more of age,**
> **And þou shalt certayn ben,**
> **Sumday whan þou shalt hym sen!**
>
> **(ll.7645 ff.)**

The King's acute discomfort is apparent in the lack of invention and the weak tone of his prevarication as compared with his deception of Porus. And he fails; for Candace has the trump card. She goes to her chamber and produces, to Alexander's astonishment, a true likeness of himself.[9] Disguise here has been treated as a sophisticated and humourous game, a test of wits, and not unlike the treatment of disguise themes in the Tudor drama which was to follow.[10] It also uses, on a very aristocratic level, the familiar medieval theme of the "wily woman". The King, out-matched and frustrated, vents his ire in a well-worn direction:

> **"O," quoþ Alisaunder, " Allas,**
> **Þat J nere y-armed wel,**
> **And had my swerd of broun steel.**
> **Many an heued wolde J claue**
> **Ar J in prisoun laue.**
> **Ac noman ne may hym waite**
> **From þise wymmans dissaite! "**
>
> **(ll. 7674 ff.)**

William of Palerne deals with disguise of a quite different order. Transformation into a werewolf and the unlikely array of humans in animal skins are key elements in the narrative. The poet approaches the comedy inherent in this kind of disguise not by way of the success of the deception, nor the skill of the guile which is used, but obliquely, by way of the fear, surprise and enjoyment experienced by characters in the narrative as they see the human looking like an

animal, or an animal behaving like a human. This romance draws to itself the comic reactions of its audience and transfers them to its characters.

William and Melior, the lovers, are helped to escape the suit of Partenedon for Melior's hand by their friend, Alisaundrine. She steals the skins of two white bears from the kitchen and, in turn, sews Melior and William into them. First Melior asks Alisaundrine, "in here merþe", if she does not make a bold bear:

> **"3is, madame",seide þe mayde,"be marie of heuene,**
> **3e arn so grisli a gost a gom on to loke,**
> **þat i nold for al þe god þat euer god made,**
> abide 3ou in a brode weie bi a large mile;
> so breme a wilde bere 3e bi-seme nowþe." **(11.1729 ff.)**

William then, "ful merili", asks Melior how she likes him in the skin. She replies, banteringly:

> **"so breme a bere 3e be-seme a burn on to loke,**
> **þat icham a-grise bi god þat me made,**
> **to se so hidous a si3t of youre semli face!"**
> **(11.1742 ff.)**

The action, which is one of urgent escape, is suspended for twenty lines (11.1724-1744) in order to savour the sense of the ridiculous which each finds in the other's appearance. It not only undercuts, but utilises the comic disbelief inevitable in the audience's reaction.

Similar is the treatment of near-discovery where a Greek comes upon the bears walking, on two legs, through the garden in order to make their escape. He startles them:

> **&, or he wiste, he was war of þe white beres,**
> **Þei went a-wai a wallop as þei wod semed.**
> **& nei3 wod of his witt he wax nei3 for drede,**
> **& fled as fast homward as fet mi3t drie,. . . .**
> **(11.1769 ff.)**

The farcical effect of their fear of him, and his of them, is enhanced by his friends' amusement at his agitated manner, and unlikely report:

> **þanne were his felawes fain for he was adradde,**
> **& lau3eden of þat gode layk,. . . .**
> **(11.1783 f.)**

The Greeks' amusement at his improbable story parallels our own at the invention of the romance.

One farce episode is entirely the invention of the English romancer, since nothing similar occurs in the French version.[11] The lovers, this time disguised as deer, have hidden on board a ship sailing to Messina. They leave the ship, in the French version (French: ll.4629-4631),[12] when the werewolf draws the attention of the sailors to himself. In the English version, they appear on deck only to be seen by a ship's boy, who knocks the hind (Melior) "so sor in þe necke, /Pat sche top ouer tail tombled ouer þe hacches". To the boy's amazement, the hart picks up the hind and, walking on his hind legs with her in his arms, carries her safely ashore. (English: ll.2764-2827). The English poet is clearly at pains to exploit the possibilities of incongruity even at a point where his French source -writer is not.

The disguise theme, then, gives opportunity for a broad range of comedy stretching from embarrassment stemming from an unexpected encounter with authority in King Edward to the courtly joke, in Octavian, of the close alliance of the nobly-born and the bourgeois, with the former uncomfortably accommodated by the latter; it includes the witty deception of others by false name and appearance, in Kyng Alisaunder, confounded in the end by greater wit, and the strongly

visual humour, in William of Palerne, of human form and behaviour in animal dress.

Added to this breadth is the English tendency to elaborate upon the theme and to plumb the episodes for greater sophistication. Thus Rauf Coilyear takes much the same theme as is found in King Edward, but removes it and its proper culture from their true element to produce strong literary irony; both versions of Octavian describe the behaviour of an individual out of his proper element, but the Northern version exploits this further and incorporates an element of fabliau; Kyng Alisaunder uses the same deceptive device on two occasions, but offers in the second instance an unusual example of the disguised hero discovered; and William of Palerne takes humour of the most basic kind, the incongruity of the human and the animal, but anticipates audience reaction within the episode and demands a listening response on a dual level. William of Palerne also demonstrates the English romancers' willingness to invent, independently of their source, in order to heighten this effect.

In the five romances dealt with here, it appears that humour works best when it is not closely associated with courtly ideals and the more usual romance patterns of behaviour. Kyng Alisaunder, therefore, amuses us less with the King's successful disguise than with the picture of the hero outwitted in his own attempt to outwit others; the excitement of the escape of hero and heroine in William of Palerne dims beside the fright and consternation of the Greek soldier and the ship-boy who cannot believe what they have seen: the preoccupation of Octavian (N) with the noble Florent's chivalrous promptings endeavouring to accommodate the narrower philosophy and

resources of the bourgeoisie must give way, for the moment, to the hilarity of the more practical endeavours of the butcher and his wife; and the picture of king and emperor in King Edward and Rauf Coilyear, sustaining nobility of demeanour and gentle address in the face of an uncouth onslaught does not give such pleasure as the description of the shepherd and the charcoal-burner ignoring such refinements and persisting in their own rough style. Human nature, not always idealistic, only partially competent and successful, and often perplexed, is what the humour in these romances feeds upon. The fact that the composition is basically English, or English departing from sources, might suggest that the later development of romance included a concept of character, sometimes even that of the hero, which took account of more popular and mundane aspects of human behaviour and gave correspondingly less weight to the qualities of chivalry and of courtly life as absolutes.[13]

c) Disguise as Social Comment

Within the disguise theme, humour and social comment lie close together. It has been seen, particularly in the discussion of Rauf Coilyear and King Edward and the Shepherd in the last section, that when a man does not know the identity of the stranger he meets, he does not attempt to adjust the speech or manner peculiar to his own social class. When the man and the stranger belong to different strata of society, comedy emerges from the social comparisons which are thrown up. The romance writers are sensitive and faithful in style to differences in the way men and women speak and behave according to their birth and up-bringing; and this can be demonstrated. The second major social preoccupation of the romances is the inherent nature of gentilesse manifested in the inexorable persistence of signs of noble breeding, even in reduced circumstances, where innate quality is at odds with outward appearance. At least one romance writer, the poet of Octavian, has seen this in contrast with its antithesis, - the lack of gentilesse which, when placed in a noble environment, is resistant to refining influence.

Rauf Coilyear and King Edward and the Shepherd do not simply depict two men of the artisan class committing social blunders in front of a king. Much of the humour lies in the poet's perception in the differences in the manner of address and the style of conduct which make the relationship between the strangers so oddly uncomfortable.

King Edward's first enquiry of the shepherd, after the initial exchange of greeting, is courteous and civil:

The kyng to þe herde seid þan,
"Off whens art þou, gode man,
Also mot i the?"
(11.25 ff.)

The shepherd's reply answers the question, but also off-loads on the stranger a long, querulous list of complaints about the King, itemised in short, blunt units of expression and not relating to the question:

"In Wynsaure was i borne;
Hit is a myle but here beforne;
Þe towne þen maist þou see.
I am so pylled with þe kyng
Þat i most fle fro my wonyng,
And therfore woo is me.
I hade catell; now haue i non;
Thay take my bestis and don þaim slone,
And payen but a stik of tre."
(11.28 ff.)

The colloquial tone of the last phrase degenerates into rough, working speech as the King asks what men think of him; the shepherd, clearly not interested in the turn of the conversation, turns aside to call his flock, "Char, now!" (l.54). The King's reaction is amused and tolerant: "Pen loogh oure Kyng and smyled stille." (l.55); but the shepherd's unmannerly lack of attention forces him to re-phrase the question (ll.58-60). He adds, briefly in contrast to the shepherd, and in confidential tone:

I tell it þe in priuete,
Þe Kyngys men oon to me
A M pounde and mare.
(11.64 ff.)

The shepherd again disregards the original question and is prompted to add a forceful footnote to his earlier grievances, beginning with an oath:

"Sir," he seid, " be Seynt Edmonde,
Me is owand iiii pounde
And odde twa schillyng.
A st-ikke i haue to my witnesse -
Off hasill i mene þat hit is;
(11.73 ff.)

Without pause, he goes on to offer a bribe:

> **"And gif þou do as þou has me hote,**
> **Then shall i gif þe a cote,**
> **Withowt any lesyng;**
> **Seven schelyng to-morne at day**
> **When i am siruyd of my pay."**
>
> **(11.78 ff.)**

Although the feelings of the shepherd are manifest, the poet does not note the inward response of the King. Restraint is reflected in the brevity of his answer: '"Graunte," seide oure Kyng."' (1.84).

The King then enquires about the shepherd's name and dwelling: he speaks graciously and avoids directness by using an intermediary clause:

> **"Tel me sir, what is þi name,**
> **Þat i for þe haue no blame,**
> **And wher þi wonnyng is."**
>
> **(11.85 ff.)**

The shepherd, in turn, asks the same question, but in the form of a wrong and, in the circumstances, uncomplimentary assumption:

> **Þe schepherde seid," Whos son art þou of oure town?**
> **Hat not þi fadur Hochon,**
> **Also haue þou bliss?"**
>
> **(11.91 ff.)**

In the first hundred lines of the poem, social distinctions have already been drawn between the strangers by the manner in which they address one another. Edward is courteous, economical and to the point, avoids bluntness and accommodates the absorptions and distractions of the other man. The shepherd, ignorant of the stranger's identity, is unguarded, aggressive and complaining, colloquial, makes narrow, parochial associations and is preoccupied with money.

Rauf Coilyear takes these distinctions a stage further; this relationship, because of the very surly speech and behaviour of the charcoal-burner, seems to stand on the edge of a quarrel. Rauf's replies to Charlemagne, although often grudgingly in agreement, have a dissent within them which borders on offence. Thus, in answer to Charles' attempt to soften his request for lodging:

> **"Sa mote I thrife," said the King,"I speir for nane ill;**
> **Thow semis ane nobill fallow, thy answer is sa fyne."**
> **"Forsouth," said the Coil3ear,"traist quhen thow will,**
> **For I trow and it be nocht sa, sum part salbe thyne."**
> **(11.53 ff.)**

The poet's irony is unmistakable; and, though we are dealing here with fifteenth century Lowland Scots dialect as opposed to a late fourteenth century dialect of northern England, a feature of Rauf's speech is that shortness of expression found in the shepherd's utterances in King Edward. Similarly, this trait is emphasised by a largeness of phrasing used by the King.

At court, when a suspicion of the stranger's identity is creeping into Rauf's consciousness, the directness leaves his speech, but the short phrasing and the tendency to dislocate elements of a sentence remain:

> **Sone besyde him he gat ane sicht of the Nobill King,**
> **"3one is Wymond, I wait, it worthis na weir;**
> **I ken him weill, thocht he be cled in vther clething,**
> **In clais of clene gold kythand 3one cleir**
> **Quhen he harbeit with me, be half as he is heir,**
> **In faith he is of mair stait, than euer he me told."**
> **(11.735 ff.)**

Charles, on the other hand, expands into ceremonial and legal language as he generously rewards the man for his awkward hospitality:

"Tak keip to this ordour, ane knicht I the call;
To mak the manly man, I mak the of micht,
Ilk 3eir thre hundreth pund assigne the I sall.
And als the nixt vacant, be ressonabill richt,
That hapnis in France, quhair sa euer it fall,
Forfaltour or fre waird, that first cummis to hand,
I gif the heir heritabilly,
So that I heir, quhen I haue hy,
That thow be fundin reddy
With Birny & brand."
(11.757 ff.)

The charcoal-burner, if sparing with his words, has another language in the form of blows. This is partly comic, as has been seen;[1] but it also forms a comment on manners, for the peasant becomes particularly rough when the King is particularly urbane. Rauf's behaviour to his wife, preceding the first occasion of physical insult (11.120 ff.), presages his treatment of the King; but the poet makes no comment. This is reserved for the irony with which he treats Rauf's response to Charles' courtly gesture of allowing Rauf to pass him at the door: "..... thow art vncourtes, that sall I warrand!" (1.122); and the subsequent manhandling of the King as Rauf thrusts him through the door by the neck (11.123 ff.).

On the next occasion, the King stands aside in deference to Rauf's wife. Rauf complains that this is the second time, and sends the King to the floor:

"Now is twyse", said the Carll,"me think thow hes for3et!
He leit gyrd to the King, withoutin ony mair,
And hit him vndir the eir with his richt hand,. . . .
(11.150 ff.)

The behaviour of the shepherd in King Edward does not include blows. Adam's unmannerly conduct falls more in the region of ignorance than aggression. The poet's repeated allusion to the shepherd's failure to remove his hat has been noted.[2] Regaling the

King with stories until it is late, the shepherd sees no reason to take it off; he talks on:

> **Till hit was halfe gan prime.**
> **His hatte was bonde vndir his chyn;**
> **He did hit nothyng of to hym:**
> **He tho3t hit was no tyme.**
>
> **(11.207 ff.)**

Reference is also made to the hat as the poet notes Adam's prodigious eating and drinking at supper:

> **Þe schepherd ete till þat he swatte,**
> **And þan nou erst he drew his hatt**
> **Into þe benke-ende.**
> **And when he felde þe drynk was gode,**
> **He wynkid and strokyd vp his hode,**
> **And seid, "Berafrynde."**
> **He was qwyte as any swan;**
> **He was a wel begeten man,**
> **And comyn of holy kynde.**
>
> **(11.359 ff.).**

The juxtaposition of two, apparently unrelated, details to form a comment is a familiar technique in Chaucer. The late date of this romance makes Chaucerian influence a possibility.[3] Whether this is certain or not makes no difference to the obvious intention of the poet to draw social implications from his description of the shepherd's conduct.[4] This is endorsed at a later stage in the same episode, where Adam fetches a rabbit pie and some venison and exhorts the King not to allow manners to delay his enjoyment of them:

> **"Eete þerof well apli3t ,**
> **And schewe no curtasye. "**
>
> **(11.404 ff.)**

A similar, but shorter, episode involving a king in disguise occurs in Morte Arthure as a prelude to Arthur's fight with the giant (11.1059-1151). In this instance, although the King all but

tells the stranger who he is, his identity is never discovered.

The stranger is an old woman, who like others in medieval literature, seems to place herself above others by virtue of her age. At Arthur's approach, she sets aside formal greeting and, with an ungraceful gesture, first warns him to be quiet and then casts disrespectful doubt upon his wisdom:

> Thane this wafalle wyfe vn-wynly him gretez,
> couerde vp on hire kneese, and clappyd hire handez;
> Said,"Carefulle careman, thow carpez to lowde!
> May ȝone warlawe wyt, he worows vs alle!
> Weryd worthe the wyghte ay, that the they wytt refede,
> That mase the to wayfe here in thise wylde lakes!
> I warne the fore wyrschipe, thou wylnez aftyr sorowe!
>
> (ll. 955 ff.)

The poet makes use of his alliterative technique to give the old woman an uncourtly style of address, avoiding the more usual "sir". He does this again at line 962:

> Whedyre buskes thou berne? vnblysside thow semes!
>
> (l.962.)

Arthur then identifies himself, not as King, but as one of his finest knights on a noble errand:

> I am comyn fra the conquerour, curtaise and gentille,
> As one of the hathelest of Arthur knyghtez,
> Messenger to this myx, for mendemente of the pople, . .
>
> (ll.987 ff.)

As in Rauf Coilyear, evidence of refinement seems to excite, in some social contexts, the least gentle of responses. The old woman dismisses his cause:

> "ȝa, thire wordis are bot waste,"quod this wif thane, . .
>
> (l.993.)

There are differences in the treatment of the King/peasant encounter between Morte Arthure and the first two romances discussed.

In Rauf Coilyear and King Edward, the shepherd and the charcoal-burner are as important in the narrative, (in Rauf's case, probably more important), as the King. Their low social status and slight degree of refinement raise their significance because the romance focusses precisely upon these qualities and their antithesis, the courtly behaviour embodied in the highest figure of the court. The old wife, in Morte Arthure, is to one side of the main narrative and her brief episode (approximately one hundred lines[5]) seems to say more about the deeper issues of the poem than about social conduct by itself. It could be argued that, through the old woman, the poet is questioning the values of chivalry in general, and Arthur's identity as a chivalric king in particular. The wife's lack of recognition has an almost wilful quality in it; and her low style of address, forthright and sceptical, temporarily reduces the King's dignity and quest to a point where they border on the ridiculous. For this brief duration, the life and concerns of the woman, albeit narrow and immediate, have more validity than those of the King.

The romances in general, however, take the manifestation of courtliness, in speech and behaviour, to be a good in itself and wholly admirable. In the context of disguise, it is often the only evidence speaking for the true identity of the individual.[6]

In the case of the hero of Ipomadon, it is a small courtly act, near the beginning of the romance, which is the only aspect of the man to arouse the approval of the Lady's court. Ipomadon has shown himself to be uncompetitive in respect of prowess, and boasts no name save that of the "stravnge valete". But he does make a gift

of his own mantle to the butler of the court. Onlookers see this as nobly done, and pause in their denigration of him:

> **All them, that thowght skorne before,**
> **Thought them selfe folys therefore,**
> **They satt and held them still,**
> **And sayden,it was a gentill dede:**
>
> **(11.482 ff.)**

The Lady takes the act to denote noble birth:

> **She sayd to hem, þat by her stode:**
> **"This chyld is comyn of gentille blode,**
> **It may no nother weye bee!"**
>
> **(11.500 ff.)**

Accomplishments are the mark of gentle up-bringing in a stranger. In Sir Tristrem, for example, the captain of the Norwegian ship, his abductor, is the first to observe Tristrem's courtly skills; for the youth defeats him in a game of chess. Gottfried's version describes the impression that the young man makes upon the seaman more fully than Sir Tristrem:

> **Every now and then this polished young courtier interposed with fashionable small-talk and exotic terms of chess. These he pronounced well - he knew a great many of them - and with them he adorned his game.**
>
> **7**

Sir Tristrem describes more fully the next demonstration of the unknown youth's accomplishments, the breaking of the deer.[8] Lines 473-517 describe the process, as performed by Tristrem, with minute precision. At this point, Tristrem is in England where the art of venery is imperfectly practised:

> **Þe tokening when þai blewe,**
> **Þer wondered mani aman;**
> **Þe costom þai nou3t knewe,**
> **For þi fro bord þai ran;**
> **No wi_st þai nou3t hou newe**
> **Þai hadde hunters þan.**
> **It is amanner of glewe**
> **To teche hem þat no can**
> **Swiche þing.**
>
> **(11.518 ff.)**

A comparison is drawn here between the common customs of an ordinary huntsman and the educated skills of a gentleman. But this version of the story is not explicit about this. In Gottfried's version, Tristan's exposition is received sympathetically by a man of his own quality, and the poet emphasises this:

> **The Master-Huntsman looked at the young stranger with a kindly smile, for he was well-bred himself and was versed in all the graces that a good man should know.**
>
> 9

The skills and attributes of a gentleman are immediately recognisable by any other member of the courtly society. An indication of this special relationship occurs again in Gottfried, in the "Tantris" episode. The tutor to the Queen is moved by Tristan's playing to plead for help to him:

> **It happened meanwhile that a priest entered and saw how accomplished he was with his hands and voice, for he was himself a skilful and dextrous performer on every variety of stringed instrument, and master of many languages. He had devoted his life and talents to the cultured pursuits of the court.**
>
> 10

In Sir Tristrem, "Tramtris" shows skill in minstrelsy and becomes Isolde's tutor; but the poet either misses the courtly significance of this special accomplishment or, in the process of compression, has deliberately omitted any reference to its importance. Generally, in romances of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it is sufficient simply to mention special skills as an indication of gentle breeding, and to rest on the assumption that a predisposition towards these talents, like the King's harping in Sir Orfeo, is born within the noble individual.[11]

Octavian carries another example of this innate predisposition in those of high birth. Florent, the undiscovered Emperor's son,

living with the Parisian butcher, Clement, shows a natural preference for hawks over oxen (O.N. ll.649 ff.) and for well-bred horses at any price (O.N. ll.721 ff.); and Clement's wife interprets this correctly (O.N. ll.706 ff. & 755 ff.).[12] Set against this is the portrayal of the bourgeois whose behaviour and preferences are just as strongly prescribed by his birth. This is demonstrated when Clement is invited to the Emperor's court on the strength of his "son"'s valour on the battlefield. Florent's true identity is still undiscovered by his natural and adopted fathers, and the court does not know that Clement has no true relationship to Florent. Efforts are made, therefore, to entertain the butcher as befits an honourable parent:

> **And Clement, for the childes sake,**
> **Full faire to courte thay gan take**
> **And gaffe hym full riche wede;**
> **One softe segges was he sette**
> **Amonge grete lordes at the mete**
> **And servede of many riche brede!**
>
> **(O.N.11.1129 ff.)**
> **13**

The occasion, so far as the court is concerned, is held in celebration of the young knight's prowess:

> **He was so curtayse and so bolde**
> **That alle hym lovede, yonge and olde,**
> **For his doghety dede.**
>
> **(O.N.11.1138 ff.)**

Clement, however, views the splendour of the feast only in terms of what it will cost him. For he, as unconscious of the embarassing discrepancy between his behaviour and his surroundings as Florent had been earlier in the narrative, takes the mantles belonging to the kings attending the Emperor's court (O.N.11.1153 ff.). When challenged, he explains:

. . . . . "By Goddes daye,
For youre mete moste ye paye,
Or ye gete tham no more! "

(O.N. 11.1162 ff.)

The intention of the poet that this should no more be viewed as an act of opportunism than Florent's purchase of a falcon, is reflected in the court's generous enjoyment of the interlude:

Theratt all the kynges loghe;
There was joye and gamen ynoghe
Amonges tham in the haulle.

(O.N. 11.1165 ff.)

The King of France generously offers to pay "for alle" (O.N. l.1170).

Clement's birth and natural disposition are unaffected by all this. His next act, according to his own understanding of social decency, is an honest one:

Hys purce he openyd thore.
Thirty florens forthe caste he:
"Have here for my sone and me;
I may pay for no more!" **(O.N.11.1191 ff.)**

The symbolic force of the thirty pieces of money should not be missed; and the poet comments:

He wende hyt had ben merchandyse,
The pryde that he sawe thore.

(O.N. 11.1196 ff.)

The use of the word "merchandyse" pin-points the origin of the misunderstanding. A merchant, not a prince, is what Clement is; and he cannot but conduct himself accordingly. The bourgeois is as unaccommodating to the influences of the court as the prince is unaffected by the life of the merchant class. The conflict between these social polarities causes Florent to be "schamyd sore" (l.1200), and the Emperor to ask the youth:

"Yonge knyght, Y pray the,
Ys he thy ffadur? Telle thou me! "
(O.N. 11.1204 f.)

In the romances there is no example of an individual of high or low birth who does not at some time speak and act in accordance with his origins. Modes of speech and behaviour are strongly distinguished, and are often specially assigned as points of recognisability in the disguised individual.

d) The Disguised Life: a Symbol of the Inner State.

Mention has already been made of romances in which heroes change their appearance and mode of living as a result of a crisis of change in their relationship to life and to God.[1] Guy of Warwick becomes a pilgrim; and although the vigorous adventure of his life changes little, dedicatory and penitential intentions change his motive for living such a life. Isumbras and Sir Orfeo progress a stage further. Temporarily, they relinquish the former life; they consciously pursue a new life at the furthest remove from the old, and they return to a life which is better in some way; for Isumbras, a morally improved life in the correct relationship to God; for Orfeo, a more integrated life, the stronger for having resisted a threat of incalculable power and dimension. Those two interim lives, the one of humility and the other of self-reliance, indicate the direction in which the individuals will evolve.

Two romances remain which lie very close to this category. Robert of Sicily and Sir Gowther also depict crisis and the assumption of a disguised life. But they differ from other romances in that the life is not chosen; it is divinely imposed; and it is

imposed in order to show the individual what he is, not what he will become. The central identities of Gowther and King Robert are symbolised in forms of existence which they are made to live. They are not released from their bondage to these lives until it is deemed that they have fully understood the symbol. The symbolic disguise, therefore, functions as the definition of what must be eradicated in the flawed life. The two romances are often paired since they appear to have a common source;[2] general similarities in outline certainly exist, but the poet's treatment of the disguised life reveal differences in the purpose of the composition.

The differences appear when the nature of the fault is examined in each man. King Robert has simply grown into a foolish, though sinful belief. He was a King "of gret honour" (l.11); he was "of chiualri flour" (l.15); his brothers are Pope and Emperor (ll.16-23); he errs only in that he believes he has no equal (l.25). This brings him to the sin of pride manifested in his response to the Magnificat, - "Deposuit potentes de sede, ... ".

> **Þe kyng seide, wiþ herte vnstable,**
> **"Al 3or song is fals and fable;**
> **What man haþ such pouwer**
> **Me to bringe lowe in daunger?"**
>
> **(ll.49 ff.)**

As the poet suggests, the King's fault lies within his heart: his offence is against God, and through God's agency he must make amends.

Gowther is begotten and born a beast, and the origin of his sin is not in himself. Engendered by a supernatural being upon an unwary mortal (ll.58-75),[3] Gowther's early life is filled with acts of monstrous precocity and demoniac brutality (ll.124-201). Unlike Robert, he possesses no feature of grace; even his strength,

inhuman and un-chivalrous, is spoken of in terms of dread rather than of admiration (11.149-160). He offends against God not only in thought, (Robert's sin), but in all his acts:

> **All that ever on Cryst con lefe,**
> **Yong and old, he con hom greve**
> **In all that he myght doo.**
>
> **(11.190 ff.)**

Here the supernatural meets uneasily with the religious, and the poet begins to balance the work delicately on a line between romantic entertainment and moral instruction.

Robert's route to redemption is clear, His sin has to be eradicated. With God's angel as his mentor, he is to become in his disguised life what he is in his heart. He has no choice in the matter: and we observe his ability to make a choice gradually being pared away. The process begins with a deep sleep (1.59), after which no man recognises him as the King. How this is brought about is not explained. The immediate reference to the angel (1.65 f.) leads us to assume that the act is performed through the power of God. The sexton is the first to mistake his identity, addressing him as "false þef" and "losenger" (1.78):

> **"Þou art her wiþ ffelenye,**
> **Holy churche to robbye!"**
>
> **(11.89 ff.)**

At the palace gate he meets his own porter, who speaks of him, in his report to the angel, as a fool:

> **"A nyce fool icome late;**
> **He seiþ he is lord and kyng,**
>
> **(11.112 f.)**

The Angel, taken by the court for King Robert, agrees to admit him

as his fool, "Forte he þe name of kyng forsake!" (l.120). Robert now begins to behave as something less than a king and closer to a madman:

> **He smot þe porter whon he com in**
> **Þat blod barst out of mouþ and chyn.**
> **Þe porter 3eld him his trauayle:**
> . . . . . .
> **Þenne he semed almost wod.**
>
> **(ll.123 ff.)**[4]

The porter and his men cast Robert into a puddle (l.129 f.) and initiate the change in his appearance:

> **Vnsemely heo maden his bodi þan,**
> **Þat he nas lyk non oþer man, ...**
>
> **(ll.131 f.)**

The angel commands that the fool shall look like a fool, and shall keep company, fittingly, with an ape (ll.155 ff.). Twice he asks Robert "Wher is now þi dignite?" (ll.156,168); and then he strips all physical dignity away from him. In its place, he gives him the sign of God to bear:

> **He heet a barbur him before,**
> **Þat as a fool he schulde be schore**
> **Al around, lich a frere,**
> **An honde-brede boue eiþer ere,**
> **And on his croune make a crois.**
>
> **(ll.169 ff.)**

Gowther does have choice, and choice remains with him. The impulse to rid himself of his inner evil is his own. The first indication of spiritual rehabilitation is his weeping as he perceives that his mother has lied to him about his parentage (l.224 f.). Robert, at a similar stage in his correction, "gan crie and make nois:/He swor þei schulde alle abuye,. . . ." (l.174): his sin is resistant and has to be eroded away. Gowther demands the truth from his mother and, when he learns it, submits wholly to the

inner urge towards redemption. The poet remarks on the immediacy of Gowther's resolve:

> **"For Y wyll to Rome or that Y rest,**
> **To lerne anodur lare".**
> **This thoght come on hym sodenly:**
>
> **(11.233 ff.)**

Gowther goes to the Pope, confesses and asks for absolution. He kneels down to receive his penance (11.265-300). He leaves the Pope's presence and freely begins to take the penance upon himself:

> **Mete in Rome gatte he non,**
> **Bot of a dog mothe a bon,**
> **And wyghttly went is wey.**
>
> **(11.301 ff.)**

Robert, designated a fool, his place taken by the angel, has no such freedom. The angel condemns him; and every man in the court, because he is unrecognised, endorses the sentence:

> **Þer nas in court grom ne page**
> **Þat of þe Kyng ne made rage,**
> **For no man ne mihte him knowe:**
>
> **(11.189 ff.)**

The King does not, however, withdraw from human contact. His sin is human, and he remains at court with something of human identity, albeit reduced and ridiculed. His presence guarantees opportunity for continuous correction and effective lessons in humility. He is allowed to ride with the angel, for example, to welcome the Pope and the Emperor, his own brothers, - but only in such a guise as will not allow him to be recognised, and will remind him of his fault:

> **For he rod al oþer vnlyke:**
> **An ape rod of his cloþing,**
> **In tokne þat he was vnderlyng.**
>
> **(11.270 ff.)**

Gowther, in whom a beast has been born, must immerse his identity in the life of a beast; he must set himself apart from other men in silence, under the terms of his penance, and must refuse the normal courtesies and companionship of the table:

> **When thɔ emperowr was seyt and servyd**
> **And knyghttus had is breyd karvyd,**
> **He send thɔ domp mon parte.**
> **He lette hit stond and wold ryght non;**
>
> **(11.346 ff.)**[5]

He is kept as the animals are kept, eating out of the hounds' mouths and led, at evening, to "a lyttyl chambur" and "hyllyd undur teld" (11.365 f.). To this animal existence Gowther submits, and in doing so, submits to God (1.369).

Continuing in his penance, Gowther redeems himself in terms of chivalry, with the miraculous aid of God. Wishing to repay the Emperor for his generosity, he prays for help in beating back the Sultan who threatens to seize the Emperor's daughter. Three times he is given a horse and armour by an unseen hand and acquits himself valorously on the field. He is unrecognised by any save the Emperor's daughter who cannot speak. On his third sortie, Gowther rescues the Emperor from capture, but receives a wound through his shoulder from a Saracen soldier. The princess faints in her grief at the sight and falls from her tower, having the appearance of one who is dead. When the Pope and the cardinals come to bury her, she raises herself and gives Gowther a message from God:

> **Ho seyd,"My lord of heyvon gretys the well**
> **And forgyffeus the thi syn yche a dell**
> **And grantys the thɔ blys,**
> **And byddus the speyke on hardely,**
> **Eyte and drynke and make mery,**
> **Thou shallt be won of his."**
>
> **(11.655 ff.)**

No such combination of the marvellous and the divine occurs in Robert of Sicily. Robert's dispensation is not granted until he is able to say what he is. This stage in his education is reached when, disowned by his brothers, he has sunk to the lowest level of humiliation. Still dressed as an ape, Robert rushes towards the Pope and the Emperor to claim brotherhood and to plead for help; they do not recognise him and take him to be the fool he appears to be:

> **Þe Pope ne þe Emperour nouþer**
> **Þe ffol ne kneu3 not for heor broþer.**
>
> **(11.287 f.)**

Robert has committed the act of a fool, and his profound shame forces him to look inside himself. He laments long over a comparison of his own condition with those of Nebuchadnezzar and Holofernes (11.308 ff.). Speaking to his own conscience, he confesses his sin in a song-like incantation:

> **Lord, on þi fool þow hàue pite!**
> **I hedde an errour in myn herte,**
> **And þat errour doþ me smerte;**
> **Lord, i leeued not on þe.**
> **On þi fol þou haue pite!**
> **Holy Writ i hedde in dispyt;**
> **For þat is reued my delyt -**
> **For þat is riht a fool i be!**
> **Lord, on þi fool þou haue pite!**
> **Þis wo is riht þat i dure,**
> **And wel more, 3if hit may be.**
> **Lord, on þi fool þou haue pite!**
>
> **(11.349 ff.)**

There is a lyrical ecstasy about the freedom with which the King can admit his spiritual fault. Suspending the narrative for nearly fifty lines, and coming as it does after the despairing realisation of the grossness of his condition, this passage is surely intended to be expressive of the release of confession.

At this point he is sent for by the angel and asked, "Art þow kyng?" (l.387). Robert replies that he is a fool, "And more þen fol, 3if hit may be." (l.391). The angel sends the court away and explains to Robert the significance of his degradation:

> **"Þenk, þou weore lowe ipult,**
> **And al was for þin owne gult.**
> **A fool þou weore to Heuene -kyng;**
> **Þerfore þou art an vnderlyng.**
> **God haþ for3iuen þi mysdede;**
> **Euere herafter þou him drede."**
>
> **(11.399 ff.)**

Robert, unlike Gowther, has not had to prove himself. He has simply had to endure to the point of realisation in order to be redeemed. All is straightforward; the past, present and the future all resolved and explained in one brief, rational speech. Having spoken, the angel departs:

> **He went in twynklyng of an e3e;**
> **No more of him þer was se3e.**
>
> **(11.415 f.)**

Robert reigns, morally re-educated, for "two 3er and more."

This final episode in Robert of Sicily is a repetition of a pattern which occurs throughout the poem of demonstration and explanation of the spiritual meaning of what is happening. Sometimes this comes through the speech of the angel; sometimes it is done through the voice of the narrator. Of the King's changed state the angel says:

> **"Þow art my fol,. . . .**
> **Þou schal be schoren, euerichdel,**
> **Lych a fool, a fool to be.**
> **Wher is now þi dignite?"**
>
> **(11.153 ff.)**

This is said before the court which has seen no indication of the King's dignity; it has seen in him nothing other than a fool and

possibly a thief. To the angel's act the poet adds his comment:

> **Þat proued wel he couþe no good,**
> **For he wende in none wyse**
> **Þat God Almihti couþe deuyse**
> **Him to bringe to lower stat:**
>
> **(11.180 ff.)**
> **6**

The intention of Robert of Sicily is clearly didactic; its message is religious. Sir Gowther, on the other hand, is a moral romance, an odd admixture of the supernatural, the magical and the divine, in which there is no interpretation other than what one perceives to be happening. King Robert's disguised life is the life of a human degraded and humiliated in order that he may become, and be seen to become, corrigible. Gowther's is a regression to a condition in which he must live entirely as an animal in order to discard his animal nature. Both disguises symbolise the nature of the previous lives, - Gowther's bestial, King Robert's spiritually foolish. But the King is passive in his disguise, submitting perforce to his correction. The knight is essentially questing in his disguise, seeking out a new, not a corrected self. Robert of Sicily deals with a plausible situation which has a possible and rational solution to be explored, and therefore tends to be homiletic. The situation in Sir Gowther, although seen as a moral one, is improbable at the outset, and can only be resolved convincingly by means of highly imaginative devices which anaesthetise our disbelief by adding the impossible to the unlikely. We may be instructed obliquely, but the lesson does not have a life outside the romance world.

The life-disguise is used differently, therefore, according to the poet's purpose. The inspirational intent of Robert of Sicily keeps the nature and extent of the disguise to the limits

and possibilities of life and religious belief. The poet of Sir Gowther is clearly concerned with the moral issue, but chooses to illustrate rather than to relate directly; he is free in this to incorporate the less believable elements of romance.[7]

Having placed Sir Orfeo with Sir Isumbras in that they share a disguised life which directs them morally towards an improved life, it is necessary to examine a view which would bring Sir Orfeo very much closer to the two romances discussed in this section. It is a view which suggests that Orfeo lives a life in the wilderness (11.227 ff.) which is a reflection, in physical terms, of his own state of mental and emotional separation and disorientation. Dieter Mehl comments:

> **The poet makes particularly subtle use of gestures which are at the same time expressive and symbolic. . . . . His (Orfeo's) state of exposure in the wilderness which is described so movingly in the poem is a suggestive image of extreme isolation.**[8]

This would accord with the poet's long comparison of the King's previous state of satisfaction with his present state. He lies on the hard ground instead of in a purple bed; he shelters amid grass and leaves instead of castles and towers; where once lords and ladies had bowed to him, snakes strike at him; he digs for roots and eats berries when once he had eaten every delicacy (11.240-264). The picture is one of extreme solitariness and distance from help.

The King is also depicted as being in a state of extreme vulnerability. The Other World hunt which takes no quarry, but which will "Com to hunt him al about/Wiþ dim cri & bloweing,/ & houndes also wiþ him berking;" (11.284 ff.), reiterates the threat which

originally took his queen from him, and reminds him of its power and ubiquity. The King is alone and defenceless. In this sense the wilderness section is a symbol of the King's present state, - not morally wrong,as in Robert of Sicily and Sir Gowther, but to say the least, unsatisfactory.

But the poet includes in this section a description of the strange power which Orfeo's harping has over his wild environment:

> **In-to alle þe wode þe soun gan schille,**
> **Þat alle þe wilde bestes þat þer beþ**
> **For ioie abouten him þai teþ,**
> **& alle þe foules þat þer were**
> **Come & sete on ich a brere,**
> **To here his harping a-fine.**
>
> **(ll.272 ff.)**

Whatever interpretation one gives to this power, it is precisely this that challenges and defeats the power of the Other World and restores the Queen to Orfeo. Orfeo is, therefore, not wholly reduced and, although stripped of all human help, retains the skill which was born in him and will enable him to reintegrate his life. Orfeo differs from Gowther and Robert in that his life is not morally corrected, nor is it re-made; it is rather focussed upon the inner power which is at the centre of his self. In the wilderness he is already using, because he has nothing else, the strength he will carry back to his kingdom.

Sir Orfeo, therefore, has links with Sir Gowther and Robert of Sicily insofar as the wilderness is a symbol of the King's solitary and desolate state. It is also about a testing of self in order to find the true centre of self, and the direction of life subsequent to the test. In this way it also relates closely to Sir Isumbras.

It can be seen from this that there is a distinction between

the use of disguise to assay the self, and the assumption of a disguised life in order to educate and correct the self. In the romance of Sir Orfeo the poet appears to combine techniques. In the examples of the disguised life in Sir Gowther and Robert of Sicily, there is also a narrow difference in the two poets' artistic intentions and in their demands upon the audience. These differences exist, nevertheless, and demonstrate the fine consciousness of the romancers as they put the disguise theme to use. They show that the same theme, treated differently by two individual poets, can exist in wholly different relationships to the rest of the work.

e) The Identity Romances.

A group of poems, termed here the "Identity Romances", falls into the category of concealed identity rather than physical disguise. They are romances which pivot upon unknown or unrecognised identity and undeclared relationships. In Lai le Freine, Sir Degaré, Libeaus Desconus and Sir Perceval of Galles, circumstances of birth and up-bringing, or the wish of the parent, prevent the individual from knowing who he is; he is brought up in an environment divorced from, and concealing, his origins. Degaré and, to an extent, le Freine consciously search for knowledge of their origins. Perceval and Beaufis unconsciously respond to inherited impulses towards the chivalrous life. None of these protagonists has been told of his parentage. Dislocated and undeclared family relationships offer opportunity for possible incest between mother and son and formalised conflict between father and son. Sir Degaré incorporates this 'disguised relationship'. Sir Eglamour and Torrent of Portyngale are both related to Sir Degaré in this respect: Eglamour and Torrent, although

primarily engaged in resolving the knight/lady relationship, enter unwittingly into conflict with her sons; Eglamour's son also marries his own mother. Emaré is included in this group as a romance in which the heroine, for the greater part of the narrative, takes an assumed name and wanders in search of harmonious relationships. The romance is resolved in her reconciliation with her husband and father. Emaré shares with Sir Degaré a concern with loss or abandonment of identity symbolised in the choice of name.

Differences occur in the poet's use of concealed identity in individual romances. Two pairs of romances have source material in common, and narratives which are strongly paralleled at points, i.e. Perceval and Libeaus, and Torrent and Sir Eglamour. Poets, however, avoid repetition in their treatment of the identity theme.

Margaret Wattie defines the Lai le Freine [1] as an "original compilation" rather than a translation. Of the English author's work she comments: "He condenses, shifts the emphasis, changes from indirect to direct speech, and inserts description where he pleases".[2] This applies strongly to the English writer's approach to the identity theme. Marie de France sees le Fresne's case very much in terms of abandoned gentility, first soliciting pity for a disowned infant existing solely in terms of two noble tokens of identity and, later, expressing sympathetic admiration for the young woman of such natural beauty and courteous demeanour. Lai le Freine admits these things, but gives them limited importance. It transfers from the objective to the subjective imagination in giving the abandoned girl a conscious search for her identity.

In Marie's version, the mother prepares the infant thus:

En un chief de mut bon chesil
Envolupent l'enfant gentil
E desus un paile roé -
Ses sires l' i ot aportē
De Costentinoble, u il fu;
Unques si bon n'orent veu.
A une pice de sun laz
Un gros anel li lie al braz.
De fin or i aveit un' unce;
El chestun out une jagunce;
La verge entur esteit lettree:
La u la meschine ert trovee,
Bien sachent tuit vereiement
Que ele est nee de bone gent.

(11.121.ff.)
3

The English version reduces this description to eight lines which do not include Marie's finer details on the richness of the tokens. The last line, though, has a close translation of Marie's words:

Sche toke a riche baudekine
That hir lord brought fram Costentine,
And lapped the litel maiden therin,
And toke a ring of gold fin,
And on hir right arm it knitt,
With a lace of silke therin plit.
And whoso hir founde schulde have in mende
That it were comen of riche kende.

(11.136 ff.).

The next reference to the tokens is in Marie's version, where the porter's attention is drawn to their richness. Again, the significance of these objects is emphasised; line 210 here echoes line 134 in the passage above:

Entur sun braz treve l'anel;
Le paile virent riche e bel.
Bien surent cil tut a scient
Que ele est nee de haute gent.

(11.207 ff.)
4

This is omitted in Auchinleck: here the porter briefly refers to the tokens in his report to the abbess. He describes how he came upon the child:

....And a pel her about.
A ring of gold also was there;

(11.261 f.)

He does not remark upon le Freine's gentle birth; nor does the abbess.

Le Fresne (Marie) goes to live with Gurun. Marie describes how she carefully safeguards her ring and mantle; she thinks it will be to her advantage:[5]

Sun paile porte e sun anel;
De ceo li pout estre mut bel.
L'abeesse li ot rendu,
E dist coment est avenu,
Quant primes li fu enveiee:
Desus le freisne fu cuchee;
Le paile e l'anel li bailla
Cil que primes li enveia;
Plus de aveir ne receut od li;
Come sa niece la nuri.
La meschine ben l'esgardat,
En un cofre les afermat.
Le cofre fist od sei porter,
Ne volt lesser në ubliër. **(11.293 ff.)**

Le Fresne also has from the abbess an account of how she was found.

Marie's fourteen lines are compressed into two lines in the English version:

With hir toke hye no thing
Bot hir pel and hir ring.
(11.299 f.)

The English author has already inserted a passage (at M.F. 1.242) in which the abbess gives her account. But he places an emphasis on the girl's anxiety to know to whom she belongs. Le Freine has reached the age of understanding, he points out, and questions the abbess about her family:

And when hye couthe ought of manhed,
Hye bad the abbesse hir wis and rede
Whiche wer her kin, on or other,
Fader or moder, soster or brother.
The abbesse hir in conseyl toke;
To tellen hir hye nought forsoke,
Hou hye was founden, in al thing,
And tok hir the cloth and the ring,

And bad hir kepe it in that stede,
And therwhiles sche lived, so sche ded.
(11.241 ff.)

There is no such projection into the girl's curiosity about her identity in the lai of Marie. The Anglo-Norman poem drives resolvedly towards the proper recognition and reinstatement of haute gent: the ring and the mantle have special importance in that they will be the means to that end. Lai le Freine's brief and single reference to the nobility of these tokens, added to the girl's questions, suggests that to the English poet family is not necessarily synonymous with high birth, and that the knowledge of one's own identity is something other than an assurance about one's place in society.

What this is is brought out more clearly in the romance of Sir Degaré. The two poems are very close, sharing the theme of the abandoned child who is later reconciled with his parents and restored to his proper place. There are shared elements, too, in the early part of the two narratives. Like le Freine, Degaré's mother abandons him because his birth is not socially acceptable; he is given tokens, - a pair of gloves and large sums of gold and silver; a letter accompanies him which explains that the gloves will fit the woman he is to marry, and that he is "comen of gentil blod" (l.207); he is brought up by a hermit, given the name Degaré and, when he is twenty years old, is told of the circumstances of his finding. From this point le Freine remains passive within circumstances which develop around her: coincidence, more than anything else, re-unites her with her sister and parents and brings her back to Guroun as his wife. Degaré, however, is actively in pursuit of something and does not rest until it is found. His response to the hermit's account of his infancy is thus:

He knelede adoun al so swi3e,
And þonked þe ermite of his liue,

And swor he nolde stinte no stounde
Til he his kinrede hadde ifounde,. . . .
(11.306 ff.)

Here, as in the story of le Freine, begins a sequence of events which leads to the finding of those kindred. But Sir Degaré suggests that until the hero finds one of them he has no true identity. When he sets out, the hermit is anxious that he should have horse and armour, like the knight he is. Degaré refuses them:

He hew adoun, boþe gret and grim,
To beren in his hond wi3 him,
A good sapling of an ok;
. . . . . .
Swich a bourdon to him he founde.
(11.324 ff.)

The use of the word normally used to denote the staff of a pilgrim carries with it the force of a search and a proving.

When he reaches his mother's court, the poet stresses that he cannot be known. The court agree that it has not seen so fine a man:

As was þis gentil Degarré,
Ac no man wiste whennes was he.
(11.505 f.)

By defeating the King, his own grandfather, Degaré wins the joust and with it the right to marry his mother. The poet interjects:

(Degaré) knowes noþing of hire kin,
Ne sche of his, neiþer more ne min,. . . .
(11.615 f.)

Nor is there any man in whom Degaré can place his trust:

And Degarré ne knew no man,
Ac al his trust is God vpon.
(11. 483 f.).

Identity here, then, is knowledge of origin, of the parentage from which one springs. This also holds good for Lai le Freine. In neither romance is there to be found the accent on haute gent which

is present in Marie's Le Fresne: the two English romances use the marks of gentle birth as insurance towards the careful fostering of the children, but go no further than this.

As if to re-state the inseparability of parentage and identity, Degaré goes on to search for his father. He is not content simply to receive answers from his mother to questions about him:

> **Ni3t ne dai nel ich slepe**
> **Til þat i mi fader see, ...**
> **(11.712 f.)**

For the second time he approaches a situation where, because he is not known and his father is unknown to him, he must perform an unpardonable act against a parent. He has been brought to the verge of marriage with his mother. He now duels, with earnest intent, with his father. The poet describes the battle in father/son terms:

> **Þe sone a3ein þe fader gan ride,**
> **And noiþer ne knew oþer no wi3t!**
> **(11.1027 f.)**
> **. . . . . .**
> **A3en his fader a sschaft he bare;**
> **(1.1031)**
> **. . . . . .**
> **Þe fader tok, for þe sonnes sake,**
> **A sschaft þat was gret and long,**
> **(11.1037 f.)**
> **6**

Degaré is recognised by the sword he carries, and his father, having unwittingly punned upon the truth at their first encounter ("Here þou has þi per ifounde." l.1010) welcomes the young knight as his son. The realisation of the enormity of their action causes both to swoon (ll.1061 ff.). The knight promises to take Degaré to his castle where he will "dwelle wi3 him ai"; Degaré says they must first return to his mother; father and mother are re-united and all go to live in the castle.[7]

Until he has found both parents, Degaré has been unidentifiable. Moreover, having no identity, Degaré risks tragic action towards his parents. The same can be said of le Freine, with the difference that, having a passive rôle in events, she must suffer the tragic effects of her parents' action upon herself. In both romances, nevertheless, the search for family origins and identity has been one and the same thing.

Related to the two romances just discussed are Sir Eglamour and Torrent of Portyngale. Both incorporate the theme of the child separated in infancy from his parents, and encountering them later as strangers. There is no search for identity, however. Eglamour's son, Degrebelle, has no reason to believe that he is not the son of the King of Israel: Torrent's twin sons believe that they are Leobertus, son of the King of Jerusalem, and Anthony fice Greffoun, the son of Anthony, Prince of Greece, respectively. Unlike le Freine and Degaré, none of these children has been told of unusual circumstances attaching to his birth. The lost-child theme is secondary to the theme of the separation and re-union of knight and lady: in these romances it has been reduced to the means by which the larger theme is resolved, and it is only the culmination of a long sequence of tests and adventures by which Eglamour and Torrent gain their ladies. Undisclosed relationship is therefore seen, not from the point of view of the child who, in Lai le Freine and Sir Degaré is the protagonist, but from the stand-point of the hero-father. The danger of unknown blood-relationship and the possibility of mutual harm arising from the Mother/son and father/son encounter is one of the hazards which the father has finally to resolve. The effect on the

sons is minimal, and it is noticeable, by comparison with the importance of le Freine and Degaré, how quickly and easily they are dismissed from the narrative once their purpose has been served.[8]

The relegation, in terms of importance to the narrative, of the son's dilemma, explains why in Sir Eglamour the son, Degrebelle, is not prevented from marrying his mother. The King of Israel, looking for a suitable wife for his "son", lights upon a lady he knows as the King of Egypt's niece. This is her true identity: no-one knows, however, that she has a son by Eglamour, and that the son is Degrebelle. Mother and son are wed. The poet comments, but not to remark as in Sir Degaré that this is the immediate consequence of ignorance of identity: the Eglamour poet makes little of it, embracing the event loosely within the dictates of sources and the intention of God:

> **Thorow þe myghte of God þus haf þay spedde,**
> **His awen modir has he wedde,**
> **Als clerkes þus gun rede.**
>
> **(11.1108 ff.)**

Degrebelle's arms [9] prompt in her a memory of her baby wrapped in a "skarelett mantil" with a "gold girdill" (11.1120 f.) and Degrebelle quickly produces these tokens. The way is now open for a greater irony. Degrebelle has the right to offer his mother, by result of tournament, to a new suitor; he himself will defend the challenge. Eglamour, therefore, has the opportunity to regain his love, but only by defeating his son in combat. The shift in concerns in this romance, as against those surrounding the search for identity in Sir Degaré, cause similar shifts in the narrative plot: Eglamour must reach the lady through his son; Degaré's father is re-united with the mother, but only as the secondary result of Degaré's meeting with him.

Father must conflict with son; but the poet deals with it briefly:

> **Sir Eglamour tuk his swerd platte,**
> **And gyffes his sone swylke a swappe**
> **Þat to þe grownde gan he gane.**
>
> **(11.1225 ff.)**

Far more important is the recognition of the knight by the lady. Again, it is the arms of Eglamour, long and carefully described,[10] which suggest his identity to her. She questions him; he tells his story and she swoons; she tells her story and they are re-united. The lady's father, the unsympathetic Earl of Artois, falls from a tower and breaks his neck; and Eglamour has his wish, in marrying in the land where he was born. He succeeds to the earldom, while Degrebelle marries the lady Organata and receives half of Sedoyne.

The poet says of the re-union of Eglamour and the lady:

> **It es sothe sayd, by God of heven,**
> **Þat ofte metis men at unsett steveyn;**
> **Forsothe, sa did þay thare.**
>
> **(11.1273 ff.)**[11]

This confirms the impression that this is a romance concerned with chance. The contrivance of circumstances to simulate the vagaries of coincidence is what concerns the poet, not the profounder significance of those circumstances. Thus the themes of loss and re-union, disguise and recognition are reduced to an elaborate illustration of a common proverb.

Similarly, in Torrent of Portyngale. The plot is very close to that of Sir Eglamour. The lady in question, however, has twins in Torrent's absence, each believing that his adopted father is his natural parent. The extension to the narrative necessary in relating

the two stories of child-abduction and rescue is balanced by an abbreviation of the mother's story: she is given sanctuary by the King of Nazareth and makes no important contribution until the final tournament. The mother does not, as in Sir Degaré and Sir Eglamour, marry, or come near to marrying, her son. (This particular author may have had an additional reason for omitting this which is explained later). Torrent is brought to the Holy Land not, like Sir Eglamour, by a tournament, but as the leader of a holy expedition.[12] His conflict with Leobertus, his son, arises when the King of Jerusalem sends the young man (his own adopted son) to block the advance of Torrent's forces. It is only at this point that the long and involved preparation of hidden identities begins to have relevance.

Father and son,unknown to each other, engage in combat for the possession of Jerusalem (a wife in Sir Eglamour); and the relationship is given importance by the poet:

> **There durst no man com Torent nere,**
> **But his son, as ye may here,**
> **Though he knew hym nought,**
> **Al1 to nought he bet his shild,**
> **But he toke his fader in the feld,**
> **Though he there of evill thought.**
>
> **(11.2263 ff.)**

Leobertus captures his father and, still unknown to him, subjects him to imprisonment to lower his pride (1.2280), until pity persuades him to release the knight. This moral episode is not in Sir Eglamour; nor is it in the analogues, Guillaume d'Angleterre or the legend of St. Eustache.

The narrative now joins that of Sir Eglamour. Still unidentified,

Torrent and his two sons meet in a tournament given by the King of Nazareth. The sons excel, but Torrent surpasses them; and his arms are recognised by the lady. The family is re-united; but the close of the romance dwells on the happy fate of Torrent. Great nuptials take place for Torrent and his lady; he is elected Emperor of Rome; he dies and is buried in a fair abbey.

Undisclosed relationships have even less function in this romance than in Sir Eglamour. Even the possibilities of coincidence do not excite this author, whose purpose is moral if not plainly religious. Certainly the opportunity for incest, albeit unwittingly, is to be avoided. An interlude is inserted so that the son can chastise the father while still unknown to him, as if to persuade us that we do not wholly approve of Torrent's past life. The mutual recognition and reconciliation of the family is over-shadowed by Torrent's late connection with the church. Identity, in this romance, constitutes little more than another hurdle to be cleared on the way to a right and proper marriage and a respectable life beyond it.

In Sir Eglamour and Torrent of Portyngale then, the theme of disguised or undisclosed relationships which constitutes the greater concern of Lai le Freine and Sir Degaré, is diminished in importance beside the central theme of the separation and reconciliation of the knight and his lady. The quest for lost parents is eliminated from both romances, since this would confuse the theme of the knight's quest. Torrent of Portyngale also eliminates the marriage of mother and son, but adds a second element to the father/son conflict theme, and overlays the whole with a strongly moral and religious tone which is absent from the three other romances.

Libeaus Desconus and Sir Perceval of Galles treat the theme of undisclosed identity differently from the romances already mentioned in that they find less important the feelings of the child about his lost parent than the response of the child to an inherited chivalric nature. Libeaus and Sir Perceval resemble one another closely in that they trace the progress of a child of a noble knight, nurtured by his mother in rural seclusion and ignorant of the martial arts and courtly life, advancing by way of instinctive prowess and an inner urge towards adventure, and achieving his rightful place as a knight.[13] The quest in these romances is not for identity through parentage so much as identity realised through a response to inherited predisposition. Identity here emerges from the greater power of nature over nurture.

Perceval, the son of Sir Perceval and Arthur's sister, begins his progress towards knighthood as the "fole of þe fild". When his father is killed in combat, his mother makes a vow:

> **Schall he (Perceval) nowþer take tent**
> **To juste3 ne to tournament,**
> **Bot in þe wodde went,**
> **With beste3 to playe.**
>
> **(11.173 ff.)**

By the time he is fifteen, however, he is already displaying skill at hunting, with no finer weapon than a "lyttil Scottes spere":

> **Þer was no beste þat welke one fote**
> **To fle from hym was it no bote,**
> **When þat he wolde hym haue -**
>
> **(11.222 ff.)**

He chances to meet Sir Gawain, Sir Ewain and Sir Kay, and on hearing that they call themselves knights of King Arthur, he asks:

> **"Will King Arthoure make me knyghte,**
> **And i com hym till?"**
>
> **(11. 315 f.)**

Gawain tells him that he must go to court to find the answer, and Perceval returns home, on the way catching and riding a wild mare so that he can imitate the three knights (ll.325 ff.). On the journey to Arthur's court, he twice manifests the courtly quality of mésure, dividing his corn in two to share with his mare (ll.449 ff.) and leaving half of the loaf and pitcher of wine he has found "A felawe to byde." (ll.452 ff.). The poet asks: "How my3te he more of mesure be?" (l.462).

At the court, the King is brought to tears by Perceval's resemblance to his beloved slain knight. He tells Perceval:

> **"Þou were lyke to a knyghte**
> **Þat i louede with all my myghte**
> **Whills he was one lyve."**
>
> **(ll.546 ff.)**

The King relates the story of Sir Perceval's marriage with his sister, his slaying and his foretold avenging by his son (ll.550 ff.). He does not say that the young man before him is that son: and Perceval sees no significance in the tale:

> **For he wiste neuer þat he hade**
> **A ffader to be slayne;**
>
> **(ll.571 f.)**

The prompt arrival of the Red Knight, Sir Perceval's slayer, precipitates a long series of adventures for Perceval, including the avenging of his father's death. Perceval is unaware of what he has done in killing the Red Knight; and the poet does not describe the battle in terms of vengeance. Greater attention is devoted to Perceval's naïve attempt, lacking the proper knowledge, to remove the knight's armour by burning (ll.741 ff.). Further adventures follow and now, fully armed, Perceval rides incognito against Arthur,

Gawain, Ewain and Kay. Gawain undertakes the challenge, but as he draws nearer he recognises Perceval. Not only that; he identifies him with certainty as his mother's sister's son, i.e. Arthur's nephew:

> **And we are sister sones two,**
> **And aythir of vs othir slo,**
> **He þat lifes will be full wo . . . .**
>
> **(ll.1441 ff.)**

How this knowledge came to Gawain is not explained by the poet. Nor does he relate whether or not Perceval is told. Gawain reveals himself and they are all entertained by the lady Lufamour. Again the King tells the child's story, this time to Lufamour, but not to Perceval (ll.1579 ff.). He subsequently knights the youth, but does not name him Sir Perceval (ll.1638 ff.).

As a knight now, Perceval vanquishes the sultan and marries Lufamour. Then follows a long quest in search of his mother. He searches for her in the goat-skins he had worn as a child of the woods; and this, in romance, would seem to indicate that a crisis of identity is taking place. Having found her, however, he simply takes her home, goes to the Holy Land, where he wins great victories, and is eventually killed in battle. There is no exchange between mother and son regarding Gawain or Sir Perceval.

At no point in the narrative has the poet found it necessary that Perceval himself should know of his father. The romance instead takes account only of those things which contribute to Perceval's knowledge of himself as a knight.

In Libeaus Desconus, there is a similar preoccupation with knighthood rather than individual identity. "Beaufis" is the son of

Gawain brought up, like Perceval, in a rural environment, divorced from all contact with the court. When he goes to Arthur, no-one knows anything about him; not the King, who, in default of a real name, calls him Libeaus Desconus; and not Gawain, his father, who undertakes to teach him the chivalric arts. The poet points up the irony in this situation:

Gawein, his owene sire,
Heng about his swire
A scheld wiþ a griffoun;
(11.253 ff.)

Unlike Perceval, therefore, there is no-one from whom Beaufis might learn of this relationship except his mother.

Arthur makes him a knight, and long adventures follow which all point to his fitness to be called so. A succession of heads, given to ladies, dispatched to Arthur and displayed in procession through a town seem, in this respect, to give proof of the identity Beaufis seeks:

Þe geaunt fell to grounde;
Libeaus þat ilke stounde
Smitte of his hedde ri3t.
. . . . . .
He tok þe heddes two
And 3af hem þa maide þo,
(11.685 ff.)

Also:

Þe heddes were y-sent
King Arthour to present
Wiþ moche gle and game:
Þan ferst in court aros
Libeaus Desconus los
And his gentill fame.
(11.726 ff.)

and:

He bar þe heed into þe toun;
Wiþ a fair processioun
Þe folk com him a3ain.
(11.1486 ff.)

For this poet, fame must be commensurate with achievement; the two constitute the knight's identity.

Beaufis is eventually told who he is by a worm with wings and a tail and the face of a woman. This monstrous creature emerges from a wall in Sinadoun, insinuates itself round Beaufis, kisses him and changes into a beautiful woman. The woman explains that she has been released from sorcery by kissing the kinsman of Gawain. This seems to be of no importance other than as a means to releasing and marrying the woman. Beaufis makes no response to the information, but hurries on towards nuptials, forty days of rejoicing and a happy marriage. The poem ends, somewhat anticlimatically:

Fele 3er þey lived in same
Wiþ moche gle and game,
He and þat swete þing.

(11.2226 ff.)

Sir Perceval and Libeaus Desconus are concerned, therefore, with the definition of a knight, the former with the achieving of knighthood, the latter with gaining the reputation accorded to a knight. Both romances begin with the young man uncertain of his origins, but certain of a natural impulse towards chivalry. Seclusion and lack of education define this impulse more clearly when it emerges in the child. The gradual revelation of identity in Perceval does nothing to deflect or encourage the youth in his pursuit of knighthood; and there is no evidence from the poet that Perceval ever clearly understands that he is anything more than a deserving recipient of this honour. Beaufis is told of his identity; but this identity is only used as an element in the supernatural ending to the romance. Its importance to Beaufis is negligible beside the importance he attaches to conducting himself as befits a knight, and being seen to do so. Interesting is the way in which the two poets, treating basically the same story, have shifted the emphasis in dividing different aspects from the same theme.

The romance of Emaré is included in this group of Identity Romances since, although the audience and the heroine are well aware who she is from the outset, she conceals her true name and identity for the greater part of the romance. From the point where her father abandons her to the ocean and the tempest she abandons her old name; she is found, significantly, "yn poynt to dye" (l.357) and asked her name:

She chaunged hyt ther anone,
And sayde she hette Egaré.

(11.359 f.)

The narrative deals, in the main, with the wanderings of "Egaré" in her attempts to find peaceful shelter, and not until her husband comes to the house of the burgess in Rome does she revert to her true name:

"And byd hym come speke wyth Emaré
That changed her name to Egaré,
In the londe of Galys."

(11.907 ff.)[14]

Edith Rickert[15] suggests that between Emaré and Sir Eglamour and Torrent of Portyngale there are so many coincidences of detail and language which suggest borrowing, that the three romances are related at source.[16] She argues that the immediate source of Emaré is the original of the three. From the narrative aspect, Emaré does share with the women of the other two poems the drifting journey at sea and the responsibility of a child who does not know its father. Emaré's son, however, has less to do with his father, when the time for reconciliation comes, than even Torrent's sons. He is never given the opportunity to lose contact with his mother and thus mistake her identity.

From the point of view of identity, Emaré has more in common with Sir Degaré. Degaré's name is chosen for him by the hermit with the

notion of abandonment at the back of his mind:

> **Degaré no more than ys**
> **Butt a thyng that ny forlorn ys -**
> **As a thyng that was almost ygo,**
> **Therfore the holy man calld hym so.**
>
> **(11.233 ff.)**

Emaré is given no such etymological explanation; but clearly she is meant to identify herself in her new rôle with something that is abandoned or cast out. The name Egaré, Rickert suggests, is from the French esgarée meaning: "outcast".[17] Emare could derive from esmarie (afflic ted, troubled), but is more likely to be a corruption, this editor thinks, of Emere (as in La Blonde Esmerée) which means "pure, refined, endowed with rare qualities". Only when she is re-united with her husband does Emaré relinquish the name which denoted her condition, and return to her former identity.

Identity in Emaré, therefore, has to do with the state one is in at the present time, and is how one feels oneself to be. It is a variable and can be departed from or returned to according to one's consciousness of oneself. Degaré, and also le Freine, as names are constants because, as the romances explain, they signify the circumstances of birth of the two individuals; and it is the truth of this that the orphans seek.[18] There is a psychological validity in both statements about the relationship between identity and what one is called. The awareness of this is not restricted, of course, to the romances just mentioned.[19] But Emaré, because of the nature and occasion of the name-change, and Sir Degaré, because of the etymological rationalisation of the name-giving, exemplify this awareness the most strongly.

This small group of romances, then, deals with a variety of aspects of the hidden identity theme. All have to do with the relationship of the individual to his family in differing degrees.[20] In Emaré and Lai le Freine, that individual is a woman. Sir Degaré and Lai le Freine relate a search for family origins, the former an active search for mother and father, and the latter a more passive questioning which is suspended until circumstances reveal the parents. Both suggest that haute gent is an element in the identity of the protagonists, but do not stress its importance. Inherited identity, manifested in natural prowess and valour, is examined in Sir Perceval and Libeaus Desconus. The first poet discusses this in the context of the pursuit of knighthood; the second attaches it to the knight's acquisition of reputation and proof of knighthood. Sir Eglamour and Torrent of Portyngale are related to Sir Degaré through the theme of disguised family relationships and ensuing combat and incest. They relegate this theme to a secondary importance, however, and Torrent employs the theme partly to provide a moral exemplum. Emaré, like Sir Degaré, stresses the significance of naming, yet deals with changing identity as opposed to a prescribed identity. Similarities emerge from these romances from the point of view of sources, narrative and kinds of theme used. The strongest feature to emerge from the Identity Romances, however, is the individual adaptation of the theme, even in poems which relate basically the same story and show evidence of borrowing. There is no clear example showing the concealed identity theme falling into precisely the same pattern of use in any two romances.

f) Disguise: the Stock Situation.

In a few examples of romance, disguise is used for no other purpose than to advance the narrative. It is often an expedient measure taken as a means to escape, to by-pass an enemy or to gain entry, unsuspected, to a place of defence. The escape of Neptabanus, in Alexander A and Kyng Alisaunder, falls into this category. So, too, do the attempt of the Persian to kill the King, in Kyng Alisaunder, and the entry of Charles' knights into Mantible in The Sowdone of Babylone, Firumbras and Sir Ferumbras. These episodes are most often found in romances dealing largely with military exploits, and function simply as one of a sequence of stratagems designed to outwit the enemy. They are brief, unexciting and, in parallel romances, tend to be repeated in each narrative with only small variations. Two other examples from Sir Beues and Generydes are worthy of mention, since they are exploits of love rather than of war. Both involve the rescue of the lady from a detested suitor. They are episodic in character and feature, like examples already mentioned, as exploits of daring, with little other significance. The poets of Sir Beues and Generydes to some extent redeem these episodes from becoming mere stock literary devices by adding details of realism and some reverberations of humour.[1]

The account of Neptabanus' flight in disguise from an impending attack by Philip of Macedon, as given in Kyng Alisaunder, is remarkable only for its extreme brevity and sparseness. This highly accomplished poet accords the event no more than four hurried lines:

Nyst þere non þat hym was nei3e
Whan he out of londe flei3.
He degysed hym onon
Þat him ne knew frende ne fon'.

(11.119 ff.)

The parallel version, in Alexander A, on the other hand, offers detail on appearance and the means by which the King achieves it. It is also exact about the king's route and the successful effect of his disguise.

> **Þe beurn for a barbour blive let send,**
> **His berd-heire and his hedde hett hee too schave;**
> **He cast of his knightweede and cloþes hym neew**
> **With white sendal in syght, seemely too knowe;**
> **Of gold swith gret won graithes hee þanne;**
> **All that astronomie ought too long,**
> **With ginnes of gemetrie too joinen his werkes,**
> **Hee let trusse full tid and takes nomore,**
> **But fares with few folke farre from þe londe,**
> **Hee passes as a prophet prively þanne**
> **Fro Egipt till Ethiope and eft on his gate.**
> **Þere hee lenged in þat land as a lud straunge;**
> **Men kneew hym for no king; kunnyng hee seemes!**
> **(11.542 ff.)**

The poet is indebted to his source for this material, however, having used little originality in turning a metrical translation from the Latin original, as comparison shows:

> **Statimque mutato habitu radens sibi caput et barbam, tulit aurum quantum portare potuit et ea que illi necessaria erant ad astrologiam et mathematicam artem, fugitque secreto de Egipto Pelusium, deinde Ethiopiam; induens se linea uestimenta, hoc est syndones incognitus palam diuinabat omnibus qui pergebant ad eum.**[2]

The disguised escape of Neptabanus functions in both romances as literary transition to advance the king to Ethiopia and to that section of the narrative which is more absorbing to both poets; namely, the seduction, by means of magic, of Philip's queen, Olympias, and the begetting of Alexander (K.A. 11.331 ff.) and (A.A. 11.716 ff.). In eluding Philip's forces in disguise, Neptabanus is merely positioning himself for a subtle revenge and preparing the ground for the super-natural birth of Alexander. Disguise, in this instance, is a means to

both these ends.

There is a similar function for disguise in Firumbras, The Sowdone of Babylone and Sir Ferumbras. All three include the disguise-stratagem by which Charles' small rescue force, guided by Richard of Normandy, deceives the giant porter at the bridge of Mantrible and rescues Roland's knights, besieged by the Sultan (Balam in Firumbras; Balan in Sir Ferumbras). Firumbras has the longest and most dramatic account of this. The poet here has Richard describe his plan of action to Charles before they set out, thus anticipating the event:

"There may no man passe in no wyse
But in the gyse of marchaundyse,
Tak we oure copes and oure haberiouns,
And with copes there-Inne of gold, and syklatouns,
With good swerdes, wel & scharp y-grounde,
To take and to grype and make many a wounde,-
Someres by-fere with oure marchaundyse! "

(11.1221 ff.)

Charles agrees to this, and rises early the next morning "Pe someres to trusse in gyse of marchaundye". (11.1235 ff.). At the bridge, a lengthy exchange takes place between Richard and the giant. To allay the porter's suspicions, Richard pretends devotion to Mahomet as well as a spurious errand:

"We be3t marchauntes of aragoun to passe thy passage,
with syklatoun and sendal and purpur of prys,
With ryche clothys off gold that ben of gret prys,
To honour oure mahound and oure mamotrye
And oure ryche feste that 3e haue don crye,
To schewe and to selle to oure ameraunt."

(11.1267 ff.)

The giant accepts this explanation and admits four of them. They cast off their disguise and remove him from the bridge, setting a force to keep it while they move on to Balam.

The account in The Sowdone deals with the episode in a similar

sequence. But missing is the feeling of suspense, the sense of the present in the exchange of dialogue and the considerable detail in Firumbras. Given the much shorter metrical line, The Sowdone deals with the episode in a peremptory manner. He describes the plan of disguise in Richard's proposal to Charles thus:

> **"In yonde wode ye moste dwelle**
> **Priuely in this maner,**
> **And xij of vs shalle vs araye**
> **In gyse of stronge marchauntes,**
> **And fille oure somers withe fag and haye,**
> **To passe the brigge Currauntes.**
> **We shalle be armed vnder the cote**
> **With goode swerdes wele I-gyrde, ...**
>
> **(11.2861 ff.)**

This resembles Richard's speech in Firumbras, but omits details and the sense of action found in line 1226. The Sowdone's version does not, like Firumbras, show the effect of the disguise at the bridge. The knights arrive at Mantrible; the porter refuses to admit them; and they gain entry by fighting. The efficacy, or otherwise, of the disguise is not mentioned. Again, the poet has other concerns. The treachery of Ganelon and the adventures consequent upon his repeated attempts to impede Charles, the onward drive towards the city of Agremore and the capture of the Sultan are major elements in the narrative at this point to which the Mantrible disguise has little relevance.

In Sir Ferumbras, probably the earliest of the three versions,[3] the battle at Aigremont is coloured by the intervention, on Balan's side, of the Devil disguised as Mahomet (11.5139 ff.). The disguise of Charles' rescue force is relegated to no more than a mere stratagem by which the bridge and the town are taken (11.4345 ff.).

Another example of disguise abbreviated and muted in preparation for another, more dramatic disguise, is found in Kyng Alisaunder. An attempt is made upon the life of the King by a Persian soldier attracted to Darius' offer of his daughter and half his kingdom as a reward to the successful assassin:

> **Amonge hem of Perce was a kni3th,**
> **Hardy, stalworþe, queynt, and wi3th.**
> **A kni3th of Grece sone he slou3,**
> **And his armes sone of-drou3,**
> **And quyk armed hym þere-inne,**
> **And nei3ed Alisaunder bi gynne.**
>
> **(11.3886 ff.)**

This somewhat colourless device proves not only profitless, but is far surpassed by the poet's description of the King's own double-disguise which successfully deceives Porus (11.5465 ff.), and his subsequent elaborate and extended attempt at deception-by-disguise of Candulek and Candace (11.7464-7680). The thwarting of the Persian's attempt, being caused by a breaking spear, also compares unfavourably with the subtle erosion of the King's deception by the womanly wit of Candace.[4]

The disguise episodes in Kyng Alisaunder and the three Charlemagne romances just discussed are therefore diminished in importance to brief exploits of danger and daring in a military context. As part of the structure of the romances, they function, like the two versions of Neptabanus' escape, as small narrative links preparing for episodes of much greater importance. In Sir Ferumbras and Kyng Alisaunder, (and again in Neptabanus' escape), those larger episodes involve disguise of a more spectacular nature.

Generydes and Sir Beues both use disguise in the context of the

rescue of the hero's lady. Both romances have long and involved plots in which the rescue follows a sequence of hazards and perils, at least one of these being a journey undertaken in disguise.

Generydes could be said to use disguise more frequently than any other romance; three occasions, between lines 4201 and 4350, are found on which to disguise the hero, his friend and his lady. On the first occasion, Generydes and Natanell, his friend, seeking Clarionas and hoping to hear news of her, sail to the city of Egidias, posing as merchants:

> **In ȝise of mercaunde3 thei dede them showe,**
> **fful craftely in All ther besynes,**
> **Not like no men of warre but all of pece,**
> **So to gide them thei wer well apayde,**
> **To harkyn tidynges what these pepill saide.**
> **(11.4203.ff.)**

Disguised entry into the land of the enemy using the pretext of trading is strongly redolent of other, earlier romances, - Havelok the Dane, for example.

The master of the ship then offers to "devise a craft" to help Generydes to gain his end. He shows the hero how to give his face a leprous appearance and advises him to change clothes with a poor man (11.4229 ff.). Generydes does this, and takes a cup and clapper and stands near the temple where Clarionas is to pass (11.4257 ff.). He puts a ring on his finger and asks her for alms. She recognises the ring and the hero (11.4278 ff.). This second disguise episode is too close to the legend of Tristan not to have been borrowed from it.[5]

The third disguise episode, developing round the escape of Clarionas, has her posing as a laundress. This seems to be original;

and the poet pauses in the narrative to explore the practical difficulties of giving a lady of high birth the appearance of a work-woman. Dramatic dialogue between Clarionas and a real laundress, and realistic detail are added to this escape:

> **And tokkyd vppe she was well fro the grounde,**
> **Before hir eyȩ a kerche hanging side,**
> **Ther trusses on ther hedes all redy bounde,**
> **And furth thei went, themm nede non other gide;**
> **Thanne saide the lavander, "abide, abide,**
> **This white leggys," quod she, "I woote it wele,**
> **They wolle shende oure purpose euery dele!**
>
> **"Ye, wote ye what," quod she, "that ye shall do?**
> **Bryng me water, and thanne late me alone,**
> **A Coppe of Aisshes ye must bryng Also.**
> **Where with my leggys shalbe wasshid anone,**
> **That All the while I warrant shalbe gone; . . . .**
> **(11. 4404 ff.)**

This is clearly the most entertaining disguise episode of the three. It has a sense of urgency and ingenuity about it which give it conviction. Its effect is dulled by the preceding episodes, however, since by the time this section is reached, the narrative has already been so overloaded with disguise (and attaching to that an unsatisfactory feeling of the secondhand) that the bright originality of the woman's inventive device, so apparent when taken out of context, tends to be missed.

Sir Beues repeats the pattern of a somewhat prolix list of adventures followed by the need to rescue the distressed heroine. Beues has been told that Josian has already married Ivor, King of Membraunt. He exchanges dress with a palmer, and sets off for the city to join other beggars at Ivor's castle. Literary borrowing is already as evident in Sir Beues as it is in Generydes. We are not only familiar with this situation from the Tristan legend[6], but find a strong resemblance between the description of Beues disguising himself and a similar passage in King Horn. Thus Sir Beues:

"Palmer," a seide, " paramour,
3em me þine wede
For min and for me stede!"
"God 3eue it," queþ þe palmare,
"We hadde driue þat chefare!"
Beues of is palfrei ali3te
And schrede þe palmer as a kni3te
And 3af him is hors, þat he rod in,
For is bordon and is sklauin.
2067 Pe palmer rod forþ ase a king,
& Beues wente alse a breþeling.

(11. 2058 ff.)

King Horn has the following:

His sclauyn he dude dun legge,
And tok hit on his rigge,
He tok Horn his cloþþes:
Þat nere him no3t loþe.
Horn tok burdon and scrippe
And wrong his lippe.
He makede him a ful chere,
And al bicolmede his swere.
He makede him vnbicomelich,
Hes he nas neuermore ilich.

(11.1057 ff.)

The clipped and detached summing-up of the exchange of rôles in Sir Beues (11.2067 f.) has a wry humour about it which departs from the feeling of King Horn. There is a feeling of comic pleasure,too, about the situation where Beues, having been admitted to Ivor's castle, is not recognised by Josian (who is asking news of Beues while he sits before her) until his horse responds excitedly to his voice. Josian questions Beues directly:

"What þow?" 3he seide, "niwe palmare?"
Þanne seide Beues and lou3:
"Þat kni3t ich knowe wel inou3!"

(11.2134 ff.)

. . . . . .
Whan þat hors herde neuene
His kende lordes steuene,
His rankenteis he al to-rof
And wente in to þe kourt wel kof
And neide & made miche pride
Wiþ gret ioie be ech side

(11.2157 ff.)

. . . . . .
Beues in to þe sadel him þrew,
Þar bi þat maide him wel knew.

(11.2179 f.)

The theme of the disguised rescuer receiving alms or hospitality from his unsuspecting lady is clearly a familiar one. The poet of Sir Beues has not, however, availed himself of the ring-and-cup recognition scenes from King Horn and Tristan, having added warmth and some comic surprise to the episode in his use of the captive horse.

Generydes and Sir Beues have employed disguise situations familiar from romances which have gone before. A comparison of passages shows close adherence, in places, to antecedent English and Anglo-Norman works. The addition of practical detail and human warmth to the episodes produces just enough variation to save them from stereotyping. Whether these shades of variety save them from the tedium of general predictability, on the other hand, is debatable.

The romances discussed provide examples of the use of disguise to make structural links and narrative preludes, to add one more kind of exploit to the hero's adventurous achievements, and to economise, in long romances, on imaginative and original construction. These examples of what can only be called the second-class use of disguise are often repetitive and brief because they occur in parallel versions or are taken directly from sources. It has to be said, though, that examples of this kind are not legion and are not easy to find. It must also be conceded that the invention, or waywardness, of the English romancers often attempts to improve upon the stock disguise situation. Comparison of these with other uses of disguise in this chapter serves to underline the imaginative possibilities in the theme and the advantage taken of this by the English poets.

General Conclusion

The literary uses of the disguise theme in romance falls into many categories: only one of these categories includes romances which use the stock situations without development and without more than simple structural convenience or narrative diversion. Disguise is used to examine aspects of the individual and of society, and the relationship between the one and the other, to comment on manners, birth and education, to discuss the nature of love and to demonstrate the comedy of the human condition.

These broad divisions contain individual romances which, although they answer to a general description, treat the disguise theme in a highly individual manner. Each romance forms its own sub-division of use, and it is difficult to find any two romances within a single group which have precisely the same purpose or the same effect in their use of disguise. Overlapping and the appearance of a single romance in two or more categories suggests that in some poems the disguise theme has a multiple function, and that the skill of the poet has not only been individual but sophisticated.

Reliance on sources in the use of this theme does occur. A tendency is found in the English redactors, however, to convert and adapt the theme to their own specific purposes.

P A R T II

SOME ORIGINS OF THE DISGUISE THEME IN THE MIDDLE ENGLISH METRICAL ROMANCES

CHAPTER 2

SOME LITERARY SOURCES OF THE DISGUISE THEME

The debt of romance to Celtic literature, although necessarily inexactly assessed, is taken for granted. The attempt to search for the origins of disguise themes has led to other possible sources, however, which suggest a very great knowledge on the poets' part of literary and popular material. The pious and supposedly historical accounts of earlier literature provide at least eight English romances with disguise material. These romances are dealt with singly and in groups, in the context of disguise, to discover how directly they compare with sources, and what treatment, if any, the literary loans receive as part of their transference. Romances' indebtedness to traditional tales is difficult to define because of the problems of dating what is largely oral literature. Popular tales which have a likely date, or can be roughly fixed chronologically by their association with a documented life, are compared with disguise episodes in romance which show similar features in detail. The attempt here, though, is to indicate the possibility rather than a probability of source.

a) Pious and Historical Legend.

Quite as much romance material, including disguise themes, comes to the poets from classical legend as from Celtic and Teutonic sources. Matter relating to historical personages such as Constantine and Gregory, being elaborated upon and transformed into religious and homiletic narratives, and joining forces with pious legends such as

that of St. Eustace, provided rich material for the romancers. "Historical" accounts, having little inspirational or didactic intent, were also used. The romances discussed here are those which are stories of disguised or undisclosed identity lifted largely from these legends or accounts, or are romances which include disguise episodes taken up directly in translation from original texts, or developed in translation from ideas in the text. The two disguises of Nectabanus in Alexander A illustrate this last type. The highly moral Robert of Sicily is compared with its probable source which appears in the Gesta Romanorum as Jovinianus. Three early versions of the Amis and Amiloun story are discussed with respect to what each source contributes to the English romance. Finally, Emaré, Torrent of Portyngale, Sir Eglamour, Octavian and Sir Isumbras are taken as a group of romances interrelated at source, yet relating individually to sources.

The poet in Alexander A claims to have translated his material from Latin books:

> In o buke þat i bed when I beganne here
> Þe Latine to þis language lelliche turne.
>
> (11.457 f.)

Skeat and Magoun[1] agree that the greater part of the alliterative Alexander, Text A, comes from the Nativitas et Victoria Alexandri Magni, known as the Historia de Preliis, with additions from Orosius' Historia aduersum Paganos and a compilation of Radulphus. The Historia de Preliis itself, commissioned by Duke John III of Naples from Archpresbyter Leo in about 950 A.D., is a translation of a manuscript which Leo found in Constantinople. This manuscript contained a Greek prose romance of a date between 200 B.C. and 200 A.D., attributed to an anonymous

Alexandrian known as Pseudo-Callisthenes.[2] The escape in disguise from Egypt by Nectabanus (ll.542 ff.) is certainly taken from Leo Archpresbyter, being a metrical translation, almost phrase by phrase, from the Latin text:

Alexander A:

> **Þe beurn for a barbour blive let send,**
> **His berd-heire and his hedde hett hee too schave;**
> **(ll.542 f.)**

Leo Archpresbyter:

> **Statimque mutato habitu radens sibi caput**
> **et barbam, ...**
> **3**

The Latin original describes the shaving of the head, the carrying of gold and items necessary for the practice of astrology and mathematics; it says that Nectabanus fled from Egypt to Ethiopia in clothes of white muslin, like an Egyptian prophet, and that there he remained, incognito, making prophesies. All this, with very little alteration save in the matter of sequence, the romance poet transfers to his narrative.

In the second disguise episode, in which Nectabanus seeks revenge upon Philip of Macedon by disguising himself as a god in order to sleep with Olympias, the poet takes the original material of the Historia, but expends it. Thus Leo:

> **. . . .Fecitque incantationem per diabolica figmenta ut videret Olimpiadis eadem nocte deum Amonem concubentem secum dicentemque sibi post concubitum "Concepisti defensorem tuum!."**

The Alexander poet makes much of this brief account, dividing it in two in his own narrative, and inserting the dream of Olympias, vivid in its detail. He begins by following Leo closely:

> **Þis king with his connyng kit hes his werkes**
> **With wiles of witchcraft and wicked deedes,**
> **Þat by favour of þe fende and his foule craftes**
> **Hee graythes hym as a god and gothe to þe burde.**
> **(ll.716 ff.)**

He then departs from the Latin:

> **Hue mett on þe midnight of mirth full rive,**
> **Þat grete god Amon gan þiþer wend**
> **And had seemlich isett silvern hornes,**
> **And bright blased his blee as a brende glede.**
> **Þen was Amon ywis of worship alosed**
> **And igrett for a god, gretest in lond.**
> **Hee was ishape as a sheepe, shinand bright,**
> **Ipainted full prisely, and precious stones**
> **Wer sticked on þat stock, stoute too beholde.**
>
> **(11.726 ff.)**

The poet then returns to his translation:

> **Hur seemed in þat same stede þat hee saide after,**
> **"Worldly wooman, well may þe lyke,**
> **Forthy keeper of care is conceived now!"**
>
> **(11.742 ff.)**

Here lies the reason for the element of supernatural drama added by the English poet. It is from this act of vengeance that Alexander is conceived. The romancer, prompted by the scrap of momentous speech in the Historia, and probably consciously following the romance tradition by which martial heroes are accorded supernatural origins,[4] adheres to his author in giving Nectabanus a disguise, but makes that disguise a dazzling, hallucinatory one in which the voice of the necromancer, speaking the words of the Historia, reverberates into future time like a dark Annunciation.

The first disguise episode, therefore, has been left almost as it stands in the Historia. There is enough detail in the original to make the stratagem interesting in itself and to indicate the knowledge and craft of the necromancer. Further, this episode is a relatively unimportant precursor to the events which are to follow; it is the second episode, dealing with the conception in magical circumstances of the hero of the legend, which is crucial to the beginning of this romancer's narrative. The poet, therefore, expands and dramatizes this

section of his source in order that it should herald in fitting style the marvellous deeds which are to follow.

Robert of Sicily is far removed from the romances of Alexander. It is a highly moral poem whose intent is to show how the pride of kings may be lowered. The disguise in this case in intended to represent an externalisation of the inner state.[5] The didactic interruption of the narrative by interpretational voices gives this work a monkish flavour.[6] Sermon literature, it could be argued, is where this poem originates. That, in its turn, is taken from historical or pious legend.

Robert of Sicily has traditionally been taken to be associated with the French Robert le Diable. Severs suggests[7] that this source may be responsible for the name 'Robert' in the English romance. Miss Hornstein[8] also offers evidence for the use of Old and New Testament materials, especially the legend of Nebuchadnezzar. While Nebuchadnezzer (and Holofernes) are certainly alluded to in the romance text (ll.309 ff.), and Robert le Diable has very strong affinities with another English romance, Sir Gowther (often bracketed with Robert of Sicily because of thematic similarities), this romance has somewhat less in common with these proposed sources and analogues than with the story of Jovinianus in the Gesta Romanorum.

Estimated dates of composition and compilation (R.S. last half of the fourteenth century[9]: G.R. late thirteenth to early fourteenth century[10]) would suggest that the romance author could have known of the collection of legendary stories. The accompaniment, in the Gesta Romanorum, of allegorical forms of exposition whose purpose is to convey a moral, certainly finds a poetic parallel in the interjections

of the poet and the pious explanations of the angel in Robert of Sicily. Comparisons in the text also suggest a strong relationship between the two, attributable to borrowing or to the existence of a common source, the latter being less likely.

The first section of the romance, to the point where the King is taken for a fool in his own palace, compares with Jovinianus as follows:[11]

Jovinianus:	Robert of Sicily:
Jovinianus, rich in possessions, reigns as Emperor in Rome.	1-24. Robert, King of Sicily and noble flower of chivalry, reigns with honour. His brothers are Pope and Emperor of Germany.
One night he questions in his heart whether there is any god but himself.	24-28. He believes he has no peer. Pride enters his thoughts.
He hunts on a hot day. A cloud separates him from his retinue. He rides alone to some water, undresses and bathes.	29-60. He hears Evensong and disputes with a clerk on God's power to humble the mighty. He errs in his thought. He falls asleep.
A man comes in his likeness, takes his clothes and horse, and is received as the Emperor at the palace.	61-68. God's angel appears in the likeness of the King and leaves with the court. In hall, the court welcomes him.
The emperor is distressed when he cannot find his clothes, and goes to seek a knight whom he has advanced.	69-74. The King wakes and cannot find his men. He attracts the notice of the sexton.
He tells the knight's porter that he is the emperor. The porter calls him a liar. The knight, for his lies, has him beaten and ejected.	75-91. He tells the sexton he is the King. The sexton calls him a liar and a thief, and wants to rid the church of him.
He goes to an earl who imprisons him. He then goes to his palace where he is threatened by his own hound. The porter does not believe his claim but tells the Empress of his arrival. She has him fetched before the "Emperor".	92-120. He goes to the palace where the porter threatens him with prison and hanging. The porter does not believe that he is King, but announces his arrival to the angel. The angel sends for him.

Here the versions diverge. Upon the "Emperor" 's order, Jovinianus is dragged at the tail of a horse. He then goes to a hermit to confess his sin. Robert of Sicily comes close to Robert le Diable and Sir Gowther in that the King is given the penance of living as a hound. Robert, in the English version, does not mute his speech, however; nor does he fight the Saracen. Part of his humiliation is the inability of his brothers to recognise him. This is not in Robert le Diable or Sir Gowther.

In the final section, the English romance and the tale in the Gesta Romanorum converge again:

Jovinianus:	Robert of Sicily:
Jovinianus makes confession to the hermit and admits the sin of pride. The hermit shrives him and tells him that he could not be recognised while still in sin.	308-382. Robert thinks on his sin and compares himself with proud Nebuchadnezzar and Holofernes. He names himself a fool.
He goes to the palace, is welcomed by the porter and taken to the "Emperor". His sin is explained to the court (the sin of pride) and God's punishment is explained.	383-404. The angel makes him confess that he is a fool before the court. He explains God's punishment and tells of His forgiveness.
The "Emperor" says he is God's angel in whose trust the empire has been kept. He vanishes.	405-416. The "King" says that he in an angel set to keep the kingdom. He goes in the twinkling of an eye.
Jovinian lives devoutly and ends his days.	416-437. Robert loves God and dies in his faith. All this is written in Rome.
Moralite: the humbling of a man who, in abundance of power and riches, sets himself up against God. Detailed analysis of the tale as a religious allegory.	438-end. Thus God's might is manifested. He sets the mighty low, and the humble high. Enjoinder to keep faith with Christ in whom is comfort, joy and love.

Here, then, is a disguise theme taken in large part from what was probably a source of pulpit literature, - itself an amalgam of apposite tales and legends with pious moralisations appended. The romance poet has added a brisk metre, some borrowings from at least one other source, and considerable pathos, in intensifying the condition of the degraded king, and in the long passages of self-recrimination and contrition. He has not only kept the moral and didactic tone of the Gesta; he has also added comparisons from biblical sources with kings humbled to a bestial existence; he has transferred the function of moral interpretation from the moralite to the narrator and the angel.

Amis and Amiloun, the story of two sworn friends, one of whom disguises himself in judicial combat as the other and suffers leprosy for his sin, is, like Robert of Sicily, a romance of didactic intent which has evolved from much simpler origins.[12] From the numerous primitive motifs contained in the romance, - the separating sword, the bathing in blood, the royal seductress and the faithful servitor, for example, - there is much evidence which points to folk-tale sources.[13] The existing written sources fall into two types, the romantic and the hagiographic, both of which provide the basic material and influential elements in the Middle English version and its immediate antecedent, the Anglo-Norman Amis e Amilun.[14]

The earliest known written source is the two-hundred-and-four line verse summary of a romantic work written in an epistle by Radulphus Tortarius of Fleury-sur-Loire between 1090 and 1100.[15] This story of Amicus and Amelius provides the bare structure of the narrative. It is a story about friendship and fighting, pagan in tone rather than Christian. There are no pilgrims, priests or angels, and there is no

punishment from God. One-third of the romance deals with Amelius' combat in disguise with the champion Adradus. This compares with Amiloun's fight with the steward in ll.1225-1368, within about 2500 lines in the English version. The Radulphus account has other differences in detail from the Middle English and Anglo-Norman versions. The leprosy which disfigures Amelius is caught accidentally; it is not the result of his deceptive disguise in ordeal. Having become a leper, he takes a single servant and travels to Amicus' house; he knocks on the door and is immediately recognised; there is no suggestion that Amelius has been made unrecognisable by the disease, nor that he deliberately hides his identity.

The second romantic source is the chanson de geste written in about 1200. In Bédier's view, this comes closest to the single, early source of all the romantic versions, a French chanson de geste which combines Christian and pagan/feudal elements.[16] Certainly the thirteenth-century chanson retains the warlike and feudal tenor of the proposed partly-pagan original; it also attaches the heroes to the Christian Charlemagne cycle. Like Radulphus' version, the chanson contains no complex recognition theme; the reconciliation of the parted friends occurs as soon as the leper presents himself. The chanson elaborates upon Amiloun's journey to Amis, however. Two servants, Haymes and Garins, accompany the leper; and Haymes is sold at one point to provide money for the journey.

The third immediate source of the romance is the hagiographic Vita Sanctorum Amici et Amelii, written in the early part of the twelfth century. MacEdward Leach thinks that this is the immediate

or ultimate source of all the hagiographic versions.[17] This story deals with the friendship of two warriors, and incorporates, like the chanson, the Charlemagne element. It also adds another Christian element, that of martyrdom: the two friends are so beloved of God that the Virgin works miracles for them; and they are so zealous on behalf of the Church that they are rewarded with the death of martyrs in their fight against the Saracen. Differences occur between this and the other two versions discussed. God is seen to chasten Amelius with leprosy; and his two servants, Azon and Horace, (cf. the chanson) take him to the Pope before he goes to Amicus. Amelius is recognised by his cup, but there is no initial rage of suspicion about the theft of the cup on Amicus' part. The attachment of the Charlemagne theme extends, in this version, to the involvement of Charlemagne's daughter in the seduction plot; this is not found elsewhere. Finally, and interestingly since there is nothing to compare with it in any of the versions dealt with here, the re-affirmation of friendship between the two men comes after an episode in which they meet, unknown to each other, and almost fight before they realise whom they are confronting.[18]

It is evident from this that components have been extracted and discarded from all three early versions before the Anglo-Norman romance and its English redaction were arrived at. The authors of these latter versions clearly wished to convey a Christian moral about the nature of love in friendship. Unlike Radulphus, they made the disguised combat which by-passes guilt and judgment a moral issue. Like the Vita, they make Amiloun's leprosy a punishment from God, preceded by a divine warning; divine presence in the fortunes of the two men continues through to the sacrifice and restoration of Amis' children. Changes are made in the chanson and Vita accounts of Amiloun's journey to Amis.

The two manservants are dispensed with; instead, the single servant is taken from the Radulphus story, and is transformed into the loving and loyal nephew Owaines/Amourant.[19] Changes also occur around the crucial testing of Amis' friendship. Absent from the three early sources is the deliberate concealment of Amiloun's and Owaines' identities at the beginning of the reconciliation episode in the English and Anglo-Norman romances. So, too, is the rage of Amis and his suspicion of his friend's murder, which suspends the reconciliation in these two late works. Other material which is too loosely bound to the narrative, or is too far removed from the thematic concerns of the later poets, is shed from the Vita and the chanson. This includes the Charlemagne theme, the fight with the Saracen and the martyrdom of the two friends; missing, too, is Amiloun's approach to the Pope, and the account of the unwitting near-conflict of the heroes at the beginning of the story.

The Anglo-Norman poet, therefore, has tightened his source material and has clarified his theme and purpose in producing a Christian didactic romance about friendship. He has sharpened the moral issue of disguised combat in judgment by ordeal by giving it divine disapproval. He has added to Amiloun's appeal to his friend extra dimensions to the concept of friendship. First, misfortune can be seen so powerfully to reduce a man as to make him unrecognisable, even to his own friend and sworn brother. Second, Amiloun's attempt to conceal his name demonstrates the extent to which love is willing to sacrifice its own interests, and foreshadows the sacrifice-in-friendship to be made by Amis. Lastly, Amiloun's disguised appearance forces Amis to reveal the protective and vengeful violence which lies within his love for his friend. These additions to the moral intent and the examination and definition of friendship in the romance are brought about by the use of the disguise

theme present in the sources, and the development of a second disguise theme suggested by a germ of narrative in the sources, but not exploited by them.

The English poet has adhered to the purpose of the Anglo-Norman author. Moreover, so finely sensible is he of that purpose, that he adds detail of his own, to be found nowhere else, which brings an imaginative precision to the moral definition of love. He gives point to the relationship between Amiloun and his nephew by re-naming the boy Amourant; this has already been mentioned in the context of the assay of love.[20] He also has Amis, not knowing the identity of the diseased beggar before him, offer wine to the man in the precious cup which is the symbol of his love towards Amiloun (ll.2008 ff.).[21] There is not only great pathos in the irony of this act. There is also a significance added to the meaning of friendship. For Amis, the cup is not reserved to a single friendship; in his gesture to the foul stranger, he uses it as an expression of charity towards the many sprung from his love for the one.[22]

The Anglo-Norman and English poets, therefore, have borrowed and refined disguise material from earlier romantic histories and hagiographic legends, and have developed a didactic romance of sophisticated depth and focus.

The selective use of source material similar to that in Amis e Amilun and Amis and Amiloun is found in a group of five English romances which include as an important theme the concealment of identity following separation from a beloved wife or husband or separation from

family. The group comprises the romances of Emaré, Torrent of Portyngale, Sir Eglamour, Sir Isumbras and Octavian; all are interrelated through sources chiefly in pious legends, though none employs the borrowed identity theme in the same way as any other.

Edith Rickert[23] suggests that the origins of Emaré may lie as far back as the eighth-century The Wife's Lament in which allusion is made to two periods of exile, to sorrowing separation from a husband, to treacherous acts by kinsmen and to a solitary existence in a forest cave.[24] The poem is brief, however; the woman, grieving in her present state, makes only oblique and cryptic references to events of the past; no names are given and no child is mentioned.

Emaré is much closer, however, to the important Constantine the Great cycle of legends which supplies the theme of the Outcast Woman and much of the detail which appears in the English romance and in medieval continental versions. The history of the influence of these legends is a long one, beginning with stories of the discovery of the Cross in the fourth century.[25] The legend of Constantine's birth is mentioned by Bede in the eighth century[26], and stories of his life were known to Alcuin. Episodes of the cycle were taken up and used by Cynewulf in Elene. By the time the romance of Emaré is reached, strong evidence of borrowing is to be found from comparisons with the broad narrative outline of versions of Constantine.[27]

In the legend, Helena, the daughter of a king or nobleman, goes to Rome on a pilgrimage or flees there secretly with a nurse or attendant (cf. Em. ll. 265 ff and 589 ff.). In the version by Giovanni Fiorentino of 1378, she travels in pilgrim's dress. In De Origine inter Gallos et

Britannos Belli, written by Fazio in about 1450, and in Dacia's fourteenth-century Novella della Figlia del Re, she deliberately puts on a disguise. Constantine the Great, the Ystoria Regis Franchorum of 1370, and von Bühel's Die Königstochter of 1401 tell of her disguise specifically as a man. In Emaré, the deliberate adoption of disguise is dispensed with. The narrative suggests that in her abandoned state she is already partly bereft of her identity; her disguise is therefore refined to the assumption of a new name significant of her fortunes.

A child is born, and Helena works with her hands to support and educate the boy (cf. Em. ll.730 f.). The boy's gifts attract all who know him (cf. Em. ll.733-741). Reference to the jewels which Helena carries with her, and to the exquisite needlework at which she works parallel the account of Emaré's dazzling robe (ll.109 ff., 394 ff., 590 and 697 ff.), and her skill at sewing upon silk (ll.376 f. and 730). There is no episode in Emaré to compare with the abduction of the boy Constantine in the legend; but parallels re-appear when Constantine attracts the attention of his father, the Emperor Constantius, on a public occasion, and the family is reunited at a banquet (cf. Em. ll.874 ff. and 931 ff.). In the legend, recognition takes place by means of a ring. Emaré, however, sends the boy Segramour with a message containing her two names.

Miss Rickert also draws attention to a Greek legend of the eighth century concerning the martyrdom of St. Eusignius of Antioch.[28] In this legend, Helena is the daughter of an inn-keeper to whom Constantius gives a peplum of royal purple (cf. the King of Cesyle's gift of the rich cloth to Emaré, ll.79 ff.). Many years after, the

Emperor sends messengers to seek for an heir to his kingdom. They reach the inn and are drawn to the boy Constantine who fearlessly mounts one of their horses. Helena shows them the peplum and tells of his origin; he is adopted by the Emperor. The importance of the peplum in this version, bespeaking the identity and quality of Helena and her child, is parallelled in the romance of Emaré where the shining robe appears and re-appears so often in sequences where the woman is alone or has just been found by strangers. The function of what is simply a recognition token in the legend has been refined and given additional mystery by the medieval author, just as the method of disguise in Constantine can be shown to have been modified and heightened in significance.

Emaré shares the theme of the Outcast Woman with Sir Eglamour and Torrent of Portyngale. Christobel, Eglamour's lady, has his son in his absence and is put to sea by her father; similarly, Desonelle becomes the mother of Torrent's sons and suffers the same punishment. In these romances, however, the abandonment of a woman and her child is part of the larger theme of the testing of the knight before he is united with his lady. The issue of an act of injustice performed upon an innocent woman and her child is left out; Christobel and Desonelle are justly, if harshly, dealt with since they are guilty of the fault which offends their respective fathers. Miss Rickert, though, finds so many lines, and even couplets, agreeing in the three romances as to suggest that the source of Emaré was the original of the three.[29] The difference lies clearly in the comparative importance within the narrative of the use to which this borrowed theme is put. In Emaré it forms the main concern of the narrative. For the larger theme, Sir Eglamour and Torrent are indebted to a greater degree to

the legend of St. Eustache.

The poet of Sir Eglamour refers to his source in lines 408 and 1339 as the "grete boke of Rome". Torrent, Herrtage notes, also has these references.[30] The Gesta Romanorum includes the legend of St. Eustache under the heading of the story of the Emperor Averyos. Edith Rickert observes these references, and argues for the existence of "an alternative collection of Roman tales of which the extant Gesta Romanorum is but a feeble imitation" which is now lost, but was available to romance authors.[31] F.E. Richardson[32] names the eighth-century Greek Martyr Acts as the source for the legend to which the two romances are indebted, but does not attempt to trace a means of access to it for the poets. Whether these sources were immediately available to the romancers or not, and whether the poems are a synthesis of these and other, unrelated, sources (the first and less important section of the Eglamour/Torrent story in which the hero performs various deeds of valour and in which there is no identity theme is clearly adapted from another source), there remains evidence of the authors' indebtedness to at least these two versions of the legend.

According to the Greek Martyr Acts, Plasidas, a captain of the Emperor Trajan, saw a vision of Christ shining between the antlers of a hart as he was out hunting one day. He was baptized with his wife and sons, and changed his name to Eustacius. An angel announced to him his future martyrdom and soon he became afflicted by calamities, lost his estate and was compelled to lead his family abroad, begging in order to survive. His wife was seized by the master of a ship he intended to board en route for Egypt, and his two children were

abducted by a lion and a leopard while he was walking with them along the seashore. Eustacius then worked as a journeyman until he was found by the Emperor's messengers and reinstated in his captaincy: he then undertook an expedition against the Dacians. During this war he found his wife working at a cottage as a gardener - she having escaped from the ship when the master fell dead to the ground as he ventured to touch her: in the cottage he also found his two sons, having by that time become soldiers themselves; they had been safely brought up by herdsmen who rescued them from the wild beasts. There was a glad re-union. But on their return to Rome the family was burned by order of the Emperor because they refused to worship the pagan gods.

Averyos' story, from the Gesta Romanorum, loses the Christian martyr element from the legend and brings a certain up-to-date quality to the details of the narrative. Here we are concerned with a knight who is preoccupied with tournaments rather than with a Roman captain who engages in his emperor's wars. The Christian theme of conversion is also absent here, and divine messengers and miracles are transformed into the magical birds and the wise old men of romance. This version ends more happily with the re-union of the family. The narrative, briefly, is as follows:

The Emperor Averyos calls a tournament at which a valorous knight decides to attend, taking with him his wife and two children. He goes to a forest, hears a nightingale sing, and finds an old man who tells him that he will have great tribulation before he gets to the tournament. The bird flies away and the old man vanishes. Shortly after, a fire burns his house and all his goods. He takes his family to the sea,

intending to reach the Emperor. The ship-master desires, and seizes, his wife. She denies the master's importunings and he dies. She wanders away from the ship begging for a living.

Meanwhile, the knight comes with the children to a deep water. As he endeavours to cross it, a lion and a bear take the children. He goes to the tournament and acquits himself well. The Emperor advances him to the rank of master of the host. He finds a red, white and black stone and takes it to a lapidary who tells him it will change his fortune. He gathers an army for the Emperor, including, unknown to him, his own two sons. The young men exchange stories and reveal themselves to each other. As they do this, they are overheard by a lady lodging in the same hostelry who declares herself to be their mother. The three are gladly reunited. Later, the knight meets the two sons in the street and asks them to tell him who the fair lady is. She recognises his voice and a sign he carries on his breast, and hastens to him. They recount their adventures to each other, and happily return home.

A comparison of the St. Eustache legend with the romances of Torrent and Eglamour, from the point where the knights leave their ladies, Christobel and Desonelle, who give birth to their sons, shows that both romances owe much to this source. Editors have been compelled to note that the narratives of the two poems are one and the same, basically, and that comparisons of detail in style and vocabulary show striking similarities.[33] There is also evidence in the narratives, though, which suggests that the poets were working to different ends, and that they borrowed and adapted to a varying degree from the same source.[34]

As has already been observed, there are reminiscences of the Constantine legend in Torrent and Eglamour similar to those in Emaré. The ladies Christobel and Desonelle give birth to sons and are cast out to sea by their angry fathers. They also have, as Helena has, gold rings left with them as tokens of love. Here the romances close with the St. Eustache legend. Desonelle, like Eustacius' wife, has two sons, one of which is carried away by a dragon, the other being seized by a leopard. Christobel gives birth to a single son who is snatched from an island by a griffin. All the children, as in the Eustacius story, are rescued and brought up safely; they all, however, find noble foster-fathers rather than herdsmen to care for them, Degrebelle (Christobel's son) being adopted by the King of Israel, and Leobertus and Anthony fice Greffoun (the sons of Desonelle) being cared for by Jerusalem's king and St. Anthony, son of the King of Greece, respectively. In Torrent, Desonelle remains in luxurious sanctuary with the King of Nazareth. Eglamour comes closer to Averyos' tale with Christobel driven away from her child to wander until she reaches the King of Egypt. Like Emaré, she at first avoids telling the truth about her adventures and her identity.

Meanwhile, the knights, in the tradition of Eustacius, are working towards a re-union with their ladies. Eglamour resembles Averyos' knight as he attends the King of Israel's tournament and encounters Degrebelle (unknown to anyone his own mother's champion). Christobel recognises Eglamour's and Degrebelle's arms, and the three are re-united as happily and as easily as the family in the tale of Averyos. Torrent, however, remains for some time in the narrative a soldier (albeit a crusading one) of the Eustacius type, and encounters his son in an expedition to the Holy Land. Here the author departs from both St. Eustache and from Averyos in placing the son, Leobertus, in the opposing

and victorious army, and leaving Torrent in corrective confinement at Leobertus' command for a year. Upon his release, he attends and excels in a tournament (like Eglamour and Averyos' knight) and is reconciled to his family upon Desonelle's recognition of his arms.

Added to those differences in adaptation of the original narratives, is the general difference in tone and intention between Torrent and Eglamour. Torrent, although it omits the element of martyrdom, agrees more with St. Eustache in keeping the pious tone and in giving the knight the rôle of leader of a crusading army. Reasons for this have already been discussed.[35] Eglamour, on the other hand, develops the strong tendency in Averyos towards romance, and attributes no special Christian qualities to the knight nor moral to the tale. It can be argued that, although the two romances borrow from the same basic source, the intent behind the narrative governs the extent and the manner in which the literary loans are used.

The fourth romance of the group, Sir Isumbras, is related to the first three, although it stands in a more distant relationship to Emaré than to Torrent and Eglamour, and in a much closer relationship than these two to the legend of St. Eustache. It also has resemblances, outside these narratives, to the legend of Pope Gregory, and possibly to the legend of Job.

The romance begins with some pious sentiment in the suggestion that the adventures and misfortunes which befall Sir Isumbras are the direct result of his sinful pride. The warning bird, however, becomes an evolutionary hybrid which falls somewhere between Eustacius' vision of the hart and the singing nightingale which accompanies the old man

in Averyos. Following this is a section of the romance which adheres closely to Averyos alone. Much of Isumbras' possessions is consumed by fire; he brings his family to cross a deep stream of water, and a leopard and a lion seize two of his children; he takes his wife and remaining son to the "Grekys see" where the woman is seized by a heathen king aboard a galley; the third child is then carried away by a griffin. Isumbras then follows the fortunes of Eustacius, working as a smith's labourer and soldiering for the Christian king against the heathen; after a period of wandering, he finds his wife in a rich castle in Jerusalem. Throughout this romance a Christian urging, not unlike that in Torrent of Portyngale, is felt.

The plot of Isumbras also contains a thread which cannot be traced to sources of the other three romances discussed. The knight, at the beginning of his misfortunes, has guarded his remaining possession, a scarlet mantle wrapped around some gold. This is taken by the griffin which snatches his youngest child. Having recovered his strength at the castle, he ventures out one day, and discovers a nest containing the gold and the mantle. He takes it to his room, and arouses the suspicions of his wife's attendants by his changed, sorrowful demeanour. They break into his chamber and uncover the tokens which reveal his identity to his wife.

The legend of Pope Gregory is the story of an incestuous relationship between a brother and sister; but it contains an episode which Maldwyn Mills[36] compares with lines 625-642 in Sir Isumbras.

Gregory is the off-spring of the incestuous relationship, but he is brought up as the son of a knight. He successfully serves a beleaguered empress who offers herself in marriage to him. He enjoys

every privilege of royal life, but goes continually to look at a cradle and inscribed tablets which he keeps hidden in his room to remind him of his origins. His weeping at the sight of these tokens prompts his wife's maid to take her and show her the objects. Thus his identity is disclosed. The tokens of St. Gregory are, like those in Lai le Freine and Sir Degaré, objects left with the hero as an abandoned infant. But the poet of Sir Isumbras has borrowed this material, together with the considerable pathos contained in it, from the legend or one of its versions.

Mills also comments on the similarities between the misfortunes of Isumbras and the afflictions of Job.[37] The influence of the Job legend is spread widely throughout medieval literature, and L.L. Besserman in his book indicates how profound its effect was.[38] There is no reason to suppose that the romance of Isumbras, wholly Christian in outlook, might not have used, consciously or unconsciously, echoes of the Bible account. The destruction of the livestock, the fire and the destitution of the knight's wife and children find almost exact counterparts in the Old Testament. Significant in the context of disguise is the Biblical description of a man so reduced as to be almost unrecognisable by his friends:

> **And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice and wept; . . . .**
>
> **39**

Whether Sir Isumbras took these loans at first hand from the legend sources or not is debatable; but its near cousin in romance and the last poem in the group, Octavian, contains enough textual evidence to suggest that it, at any rate, borrowed from the legends by lifting the material,

already processed into romance form, from Sir Isumbras, probably from Torrent and Sir Eglamour, and possibly from another source related to Emaré.[40] The evidence resides chiefly in the first part of the romance (ll.1-528) which deals with the fortunes of Octavian's wife.

Here the Constantine theme of the Outcast Woman returns, strongly redolent of the story of Emaré. The emperor's wife, having given birth to twins and having fallen victim to the wicked slander and schemes of her mother-in-law, is condemned to be burnt. The emperor, relenting, commutes her sentence to exile; and she and her children are escorted to the outer margins of a wilderness where they are abandoned, having only a small quantity of gold to sustain them. The woman, innocent of the infidelity with which she is charged, and unable to prove herself to her husband, resembles so far the heroine of Emaré (cf. Em. ll.433-648). But the possession of the gold, and the existence of two children instead of one, already begin to echo with reverberations from Sir Isumbras and Torrent. The romance continues in a strengthening relationship with versions of St. Eustache.

The lady, in her despair, seats herself beside a well (the deep stream in Isumbras), and is horrified to see her children snatched away by an ape and a lioness. The poet also accommodates Isumbras' and Eglamour's griffin, - in a sophisticated way, - by having this creature lift the child and the lioness together and fly off with them: when the lioness has fought and killed the griffin, it provides food for her while she nourishes and protects the child. In Octavian, the griffin carries its double-prey to an "yle of the see" (l.356), which is a feature of Torrent and Eglamour, but not of Isumbras.

Meanwhile, the lady decides to go to the Holy Land: she makes her

way to the "Grekeysch see", which is the place to which Isumbras led his family and to which he returns on his way to Jerusalem. She comes upon a shipmaster and gives him gold in payment for her passage to Jerusalem. Arriving at that city, she is immediately recognised by the king and is led to his castle for protection and support. This spontaneous reception is parallelled in Torrent and Eglamour, but the poet of Isumbras does not explain how the lady gets to the castle in Jerusalem where her husband finds her. Here the Octavian narrative leaves the lady until her brief re-appearance at the end of the poem. The fortunes of the true hero of the romance, Florent, are taken up from this point and are the main concern of the narrative until the re-union of Octavian and his family at the end. The lady's episode is brief by comparison, but contains enough evidence to show how the romancer has borrowed from at least two legendary themes of identity by re-working the loan material absorbed by other romances, possibly with a knowledge of the originals in mind.

This group of five romances, then, has the common theme of separation from a former identity taken from early sources in pious legend. All show evidence of loans from more than one source to make up this theme. One at least has taken material at second hand from near-contemporary romances which have already adapted the theme from the legends. No two romances have taken precisely the same elements of the theme and failed to adapt them individually, even as in the case of Torrent of Portyngale and Sir Eglamour, where the romance narratives are very close.

This group taken with the earlier romances discussed, Alexander A, Robert of Sicily and Amis and Amiloun, shows that the disguise theme

was sought in earlier literary sources but not slavishly plagiarised by the poets. All the romances contain examples of skilful selection and amalgamation into the synthesis of the romance form. Poems like Robert of Sicily, Amis and Amiloun and Sir Isumbras which have a moral, if not inspirational, purpose, even adjust the emphasis, tone and direction of themes of identity taken from tales which already possess a strong morality. Where the legend material lacks strength, the romance poet reinforces it with additions from other sources, as is shown in Octavian. Alternatively, as evidenced by the second disguise section in Alexander A, the poet enhances the loan material with the resources of his own imagination.

b) Popular Tales.

The impossibility of dating material found in popular ballads and folk tales makes the relationship between them and the romances difficult to define; but the similarity of material, including disguise themes, suggests that there certainly was a relationship of some kind. Disguise material, occurring in popular tales of early and, in some cases, roughly dateable origin, and re-appearing in romances of much later composition, suggest the borrowing and sophisticated treatment of popular themes of disguise by the romance poets. King Edward and the Shepherd furnishes a prime example of this. Kyng Alisaunder and the early romance, King Horn, bear similarities in respect of disguise to elements of the tenth-century traditions adhering to the seventh-century chieftain, Ina. Scots tales of Wallace and similar tales of Alfred offer other disguise material. An arguable relationship also exists between the Hereward tales and the romances of Tristan and King Horn, although the indiscernible origins of the Tristan legend make it difficult to determine which of the two older versions was

the precursor.

Chance encounter with a disguised or unrecognised king is a common theme in popular tales and persists in stories from Haroun al Raschid downwards. Very close parallels in detail, however, occur between a version of this story found in the account of the life of Henry II by Giraldus Cambrensis, written in about 1216,[1] and the late fourteenth-century romance, King Edward and the Shepherd. Giraldus' story compares with the romance thus.

King Henry comes, unrecognised, to a Cistercian house at night, having been separated from his retinue whilst hunting. The abbot gives him supper and, upon hearing that he is a knight in the King's court, asks for his favourable influence upon a business matter to be conducted with the King the next day. The "knight" readily agrees. This is roughly the structure of the first section of King Edward (ll.1-216) in which the king, posing as a merchant, meets the shepherd and, after agreeing to use the influence of his friend at court on the shepherd's behalf (ll.46-84), is treated to a prodigious meal at the shepherd's croft.

Giraldus goes on to describe how the abbot drinks to the knight's health in many cups of wine. Instead of the customary salutation, "wes heil", however, the abbot uses the call, "pril". The knight would have responded with the words "drinc heil", but is told that the appropriate reply is "wril". This point having been settled, the monks and their guest pursue the pleasures of drinking far into the night, calling "pril" and "wril" with each cup. In King Edward, the shepherd purposes to teach his guest a game:

But gif þou will any drynk haue,
Þou most con thy play;
When þou seest þe cuppe anon,
But þou sei "passilodion",
Þou drynkis not þis day.
Sely Adam shall sitt þe hende,
And onswere with "berafrynde" ,
Leue vpon my ley.

(11. 314 ff.)

The King agrees to be taught, and the drinking continues (11.315-370 and 442-478).

Giraldus tells how the King re-joins his retinue, and how the abbot comes with his business to court. At the end of the meal, the King lifts a great cup and calls to the abbot, "Pril!". The abbot, mortified with shame, begs forgiveness; but the King replies that it should be "pril" and "wril" in his house as it was in the abbot's; for yesterday they had eaten and drunk in good fellowship just as they would do to-day.

King Edward takes leave of the shepherd, telling him to go to the court the next day to receive recompense for his grievances. He then primes his son, the Prince, to be ready to play the drinking game when the shepherd appears. He duly does so, and the shepherd, disgraced and confused, begs to leave (11.911-1006). The king tells him to drink up and makes him the gift of his best ring (11. 1007-1090).

Clearly, the romance owes something to Giraldus, or both are indebted to a popular tale. It would not have been unlike the chronicler to enrich his account of the King's life with extraneous but memorable matter. Quite possibly stories of this kind were known to Giraldus and his contemporaries. Child mentions, for example, a tale of King Alfred

which has similar features.[2]

The King, disguised in ragged clothes, meets a shepherd and demands a taste of his bottle. The shepherd replies that he must fight for it. After four hours of fighting with no result, the shepherd gives Alfred a sheep-hook, a tar-box and a dog, and takes him home as his man. Here Asser's story of the burnt cakes appears, with the shepherd's wife, Dame Gillian, being the King's accuser. The next morning, Alfred summons a hundred men, and the shepherd and his wife are awed and embarassed. The king pardons them and gives them a thousand wethers, some pasture and a stately hall.

The appeal of stories like this is evidenced by their long survival and re-appearance in such versions as King Edward IV and the Tanner of Tamworth, King Edward and the Hermit, (certainly known in 1450), and the tale of William III, The King and the Forester.[3]

A strong feature of the version in King Edward and the Shepherd is the importance given to the shepherd's refusal to remove his hat in the presence of the King and at court.[4] This is an important element in the Scottish traditional tale, The Guidman of Ballangeich, mentioned by Katharine Briggs.[5] It is the story of King James V, posing as the Guidman, inviting John the husbandman to the palace in return for the man's stoutness in defending him against a pack of gypsies. The 'Guidman' tells John that he may recognise the King easily, since he alone would wear a bonnet, - his nobles would be uncovered, Miss Briggs continues:

> **So speaking, King James introduced the countryman into a great hall, which was filled by the nobility and officers of the crown. John was a little frightened and drew close to his attendant, but was still unable to distinguish the King. "I told you you should know him by his wearing the hat," said the conductor. "Then," said John, after he had again looked around the room, "it must be either you or me, for all but us two are bare-headed!"**

John's excellent fancy is rewarded with the gift of a farm.

This story of James V (r. 1513-42) comes late in the long sequence of tales of British kings disguised, and could not have provided the detail for the King Edward story. The editor notes, however, that the episode of the uncovered courtiers is a Scottish tradition (it was also a French one).[6] The likely existence of earlier related tales carrying this episode, together with the Northern dialect of the late fourteenth-century Cambridge MS., makes the borrowing of such a specific detail from Scottish popular sources a strong possibility.

The connection of the romance with this particular king (references in the romance identify him as King Edward III, 1327-77,[7]), was probably prompted by traditions proliferated concerning his love of dress and disguise. Facts known about his life, - his costly enthusiasm for pageants and disguisings and his ostentatious participation in them, partnered by his mistress decked in the jewels of his dead queen, -[8] these would strongly support the traditions, and would promote that mixture of admiration and pleasurable outrage in which the appealing tale is rooted. By the time we get to Hoccleve, writing for Henry Prince of Wales in 1412, Edward III's disguise has become essential to good kingship and not too distant from the tradition in King Edward and the Shepherd:

> **A kyng, me thinkeþ, for the seuerte**
> **Of his good loos, by-houeþ it enquere**
> **Of hem þat han his estate in cheerte,**
> **What famē þat his poore peple him bere;**
> **He of iustice is bounden hem to were**
> **And to diffende; and if þei be greued,**
> **By him thei mot be holpen and releved!**
>
> **(11. 2542 ff.)**

O worthi king! benygne Edward þe laste!
Thow haddist ofte in herte a drede impressid,
Whiche þat þyn humble goost ful sore a-gaste;
And to know if þou cursed were or blessid,
A-mong þe peple ofte hastow þe dressed
In-to contre, in symple array allone,
To herë what men seide of þi persone.

(11.2556 ff.)
9

Traditions of disguise and of familiarity with the humble orders had also grown up around the life of Edward II (1307-27). He is said to have frequently embraced the life, dress and pursuits of artisans and, though censured by his commentators, was loved by the common people for it.[10] The rapidity with which elaborate tales attached themselves to kings is evidenced by a letter from Manuel Fieschi to Edward III which tells the groundless story of Edward II escaping his final imprisonment in the clothes of his servant, and of his escape to Ireland and secret retirement in Lombardy, living for many years as a hermit.[11] It would not be surprising, therefore, if popular stories of one king had become fused with those attaching to his son in the making of a romance; nor would the romancer, opportunist by nature, hesitate to incorporate neighbouring traditions within the synthesis. Hard facts are scarce in this area of chiefly oral traditions, but the dates which are available provide a fundamental sequence within which certain possibilities might occur.

This is the case with an apparently early tradition of a royal suitor disguised as his own messenger, re-appearing in the romance of Kyng Alisaunder and in a modified form in the early King Horn. According to Briggs,[12] the life of Ina, chosen King of the West Saxons in 688, is well documented, having references in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in Florence of Worcester and in Henry of Huntingdon. Also attaching to him is a tenth-century tradition that he was made king,

having been taken from his father's ox-plough in Somerton. Miss Briggs relates the story of his wooing of a proud princess who refused his suit because he had been a plough-boy. Ina decides to go to her court as his own messenger. At first she asks him to stay because she admires him: then she asks him to marry her when her admiration has turned to love. After the wedding, Ina takes crown and mantle from his pack and proclaims himself to be the man she had scorned. So her pride is humbled; and she, in turn, when he becomes proud, teaches him to be humble.

Aspects of this tale echo strongly with the episode in Kyng Alisaunder where the King approaches Queen Candace as his own messenger (ll.7600 ff.). The poet has already used a variation of the theme twice in the poem; earlier on, the King deceives Porus while passing himself off as a Greek chamberlain to King Philip (ll.5463 ff.); and he dupes Candalek, Candace's son, with his impersonation of Antygon, the royal counsellor, while Tholomew, his servant, plays the part of the King (ll.7464 ff.). In the episode involving Candace, he poses as a messenger sent with greetings from Alexander. The Queen, determined to have Alexander as her lover, is not put off by this, and declares she knows his identity. Alexander temporizes by pointing out the dissimilarities in appearance between the King and himself. Candace then rushes to her chamber and confronts the King with a portrait of himself. Alexander is abashed and confounded, and consents to be her lover. Given the reversal of the male/female rôles in the pursuit of love, this resembles the tale of Ina's suit.

Very close to the tale and the Alisaunder episode is Rymenhild's

bid for the love of Horn in King Horn. When the lady first asks to see Horn, Apelbrus the steward substitutes Athulf, and she is so far deceived as to propose to him. Athulf tells the truth of the situation, and she asks him to bring Horn to her "on a sqieres wise" (l.359). Horn agrees to go, but upon her proposal protests his own low birth:

> **Ihc am ibore to lowe**
> **Such wimman to knowe.**
> **Ihc am icome of þralle**
> **And fundling bifalle.**
>
> **(ll.417 ff.)**

Horn's excuse is close to the Princess' objection to Ina's suit. Like Kyng Alisaunder, the romance of Horn reverses the normal rôles of the intending lovers; and it could be argued that an early fourteenth-century romance could easily have been inspired by an early thirteenth-century one. The existence of earlier popular traditions in the same vein as the episodes in those romances still remains, however.

Popular stories of noble fugitives assuming the dress of peasants are not uncommon and include the account by Asser (Annales, A.D. 878) of Alfred and his nobles living as cowherds in Somerset. There is also a tradition that William Wallace, (who is generally believed to have actually stabbed the son of the Constable of Dundee in 1292), when fleeing from the charge of this crime, was helped to escape in a similar way.[13] Reaching the door of a good wife at her spinning, he told her his story. By the time the pursuing soldiers arrived, he was seated at the spinning wheel in the wife's loose overall and was so covered with lint from the wool that they failed to recognise him.

Romances do not seem to have used this particular theme generally.

One episode resembling it is to be found in the Seege of Troy where Tetys, Achilles' mother, disguises him as a girl in order that he should escape a prophesy of death:

> **And sende him in-to þe lond of Parchy**
> **In a maydenes tyr witerly**
> **And saiden Achilles was hit nou3t**
> **Bote his suster þey haden þyder brou3t.**
>
> **(11234 ff.)**

The adoption of menial dress by a noble knight or a king, however, is very common in romance;[14] but romancers seem to have thought it more fitting to disguise the woman as a man than the hero as a woman; and more frequent examples of the former can be found.[15] Escape from danger or death, in disguise, is extremely common in all folk and traditional literature and in romance; and it would be difficult to trace any example of this in written literature to specific sources such as traditions associated with Alfred or Wallace.

Finally, there is a striking example of the relationship between popular tales and romance which remains, however, enigmatic because of the difficulty of dating, not the tradition, but the romance. Stories of the eleventh-century Saxon, Hereward, include an account from the early twelfth-century De Gestis Herwardii in which the hero frees a princess from an undesired marriage and returns her to her lover. The author describes how Hereward, with three companions, alters his appearance in order to attend the wedding-feast:

> **Herewardus autem per aliam viam illud occulte iter agit cum tribus tantum sodalibus, per unguenta seipso transfigurato, mutataque flavente caesarie in nigridinem et barba juventutis in rubedinem.**
>
> **16**

At the feast, he uses a ploy involving the passing round of the wine-cup

to attract the attention of the Princess. As soon as she recognises him, she gives him a ring:

> **Una quippe illarum inter alias Herwardo cytharum meri plenum detulit, astante illo cum cythara. Qui renuit accipere a muliebri manu, quoniam ipse natum et filius regis de Hibernia, ut nil reciperent, jam fecerant, priusquam a manu filae reguli aliquid diu optatum acciperent. Convivae quoque illum inde nimis despecta pincerna statim improbabant, et joculator dominae interim rem objurgando exegit, illa poculum adhuc convivis ministrante. Quae illuc accessit et Herwardo potum porrexit, contra illo e erecto. Nam ipsum statim illa oculorum acies agnovit, nam in membrorum effigie ipsum esse Herwardum intellexit, unde in sinu ejus ex propria manu continuo annulum contulit illum excusatum de reliquo, inscium consuetudinis, cum caeteris haberi praecipiens.**

The minstrel at the feast proves hostile, but Hereward shames and silences him with the excellence of his own harping:

> **Nec joculator quidem circumquaque vagando his adquievit, saepe praeterito illo autem cytharam percutere indignum esse asseruit,qui in convivio pincernam cum poculo despexerit . . . . . Quam (cytharam) suscipiens, efficacissime fibras tetendit, et sonos atque voces interim cunctis admirantibus produxit, ... At vero convivae dignum valde munere et ministrum interim habere judicabant.**

This bears a strong resemblance to the romance of King Horn (c.1225) in which Horn rescues Rymenhild from King Modi (ll.1057-1261). Horn dresses as a palmer to go to the feast. He objects to drinking from a bowl instead of from the horn which is offered to the gentle folk. Rymenhild brings the horn to him and he casts into it a gold ring that she had once given him. He tests her by saying that Horn had asked him to bring it to her just before he died. She attempts to kill herself in her grief at the news, and Horn identifies himself. He and his men kill the King's attendants, and he seizes Rymenhild. Given the expansion in the romance, the differences in the form of the disguise, the ownership of the ring and the relationship between the hero and the lady, the tales of Hereward and Horn are remarkably alike here.[17]

A relationship also exists between King Horn and the Tristan

legend, and the subsequent versions including Sir Tristrem.[18] Tristan, in the Thomas version,[19] is so overcome with longing to see Ysolt that he takes a clapper and a bowl and goes in the guise of a leper to stand at the doors of the royal court. When Ysolt arrives, she is at first annoyed by the beggar, but then recognises him. As she is about to throw a gold ring into Tristan's bowl, she is observed by Brengvein, who has already guessed who is standing there. She is persuaded to take him to Ysolt's chamber.

Clearly, the Hereward and Horn episodes have more in common with each other than with this version of Tristan, and there is no doubt as to the antiquity of the wedding-rescue and ring-and-cup themes; but the likelihood of Tristan being older than the other two is present to confuse any conclusions about influence. Added to this is the possibility that these themes may have entered the traditions concerning Hereward, the romance of Horn, and even the story of Tristan, from yet another, older source.

No assumptions can be made here about the tales and traditions romancers did or did not know. The account of Giraldus and the story of James V, discussed in relation to King Edward and the Shepherd, are offered as examples of a disguise theme remarkably close in detail to that found in romance, and available to the poets long before the date of composition; a reasonable conjecture might be made, therefore, about the use of the tales as source material for the romance. Like Giraldus' anecdote, the story of Ina might well have been told of any chieftain before or after him, but it nevertheless suggests that the disguise of a king as his own messenger in a prelude to love or marriage was present in popular tales sufficiently early to have been known by the first English romancers, such as the Horn-poet, and possibly the poet of

Kyng Alisaunder. Heroes in romance who disguise themselves in a dress unbecoming to their rank probably evolved from numerous stories told about well-known fugitives like Alfred and William Wallace. Lastly, the similarities in the ring-and-cup episodes in King Horn, Tristan and the Hereward story, at whatever date, and in whichever sequence they emerge, are so marked as to confirm the suggested relationship between the writers of romance and the tellers of popular tales.

Conclusion

Nine, and probably more of the romances being dealt with, look to sources in legend and popular tradition for their disguise themes. Some, like the romance of King Edward, incorporate one or more common themes in a single sophisticated poem. Some, like Amis and Amiloun, produce a complex synthesis of many versions of the same theme. Others, like the last group of romances in section (a), have acquired material in a catholic yet selective manner so that, although they are frequently indebted to the same well-used legends, and even to each other's versions of those legends, they do not merely offer repetition. In most of these examples, borrowed disguise themes have been woven into much larger and more complex narrative structures. Some, like the Pope Gregory episode in Sir Isumbras, have been used with delicacy to enhance not only the plot but the sentiment of the composition. No example has been found where the material appears in romance unchanged from a robbed source.

CHAPTER 3

ACCOUNTS OF DISGUISE FROM THE HISTORICAL LIVES AND CHRONICLES OF THE MONASTERIES.

It is already evident from the story of Henry II's disguise offered by Giraldus[1] that attempts to find some of the origins of romance disguise themes in historical events are hampered by our dependence on the accounts compiled by monastic writers. Some describe these events with tedious exactitude and economy, adding as detail only the minutiae of the commonplaces of contemporary life and hesitating to incorporate hear-say into history: of these it can be said that insofar as the writer was able to record the material available to him meticulously and with conscience, they come near the truth. Others like Giraldus, - and it is these which most often supply the "historical" accounts of the use of disguise, - give us only a version of history, sometimes resting on other unverified sources, and coloured by the writer's enthusiasm for the remarkable: although the seeds of truth may lie in these writings, historical veracity cannot be claimed for them; and it has to be borne in mind that the cleric whose chronicle contains great literary flair and interest is more than likely to possess also an attentive ear for gossip and a memory which is prompted by other literary material, much of which would have been popular oral tradition, and some of which may well have been early romance itself. This chapter suggests, therefore, that monastic accounts of history, including episodes of disguise, give an indication of what was known or believed about certain men and women at the time that romance poets were gathering material and writing. These accounts

include disguises, familiar in romance, of individuals as merchants, pilgrims, madmen or fools, the pose of women as men and vice versa. The disguise of individuals known to have been in perilous and desperate situations like Richard I, William Longchamp or Edward I's spy, can be shown to have been a historical probability. Other accounts, such as the disguise tales attached to Alfred, and Ailred's account of St. John's visit to Edward the Confessor in the guise of a pilgrim, clearly contain a large measure of romance-type fiction already. Remaining examples, such as accounts from Matthew Paris, John de Trokelowe and the biographer of Christina of Markyate, stand as historical possibilities with no evidence either to support or deny them.

The extent to which pretended history could be generated by the chroniclers and find its way into romance is demonstrated clearly by the recorded stories concerning King Alfred. From Asser, the King's chaplain and confessor, we have a picture of the chieftain and his nobles driven to live roughly as fugitives in Somerset with none of the necessaries of life except what they could forage openly, or stealthily in frequent sallies, from the Danes, or from their own people subjugated by the invader.[2] Ingulphus later adds a story of Alfred entering the camp of Godrum the Dane as a minstrel in order to collect information. Significantly, neither Asser, nor the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, neither Henry of Huntingdon, Simeon of Durham, nor Roger de Hoveden record this event, though all note the battle in which Godrum was met and defeated, and remark his conversion by Alfred. William of Malmesbury in about 1135, however, is interested in this piece of "history". He records how Alfred, not long after a dream about St. Cuthbert, is inspired to disguise himself as a minstrel and, accompanied by one faithful soldier, is admitted to the banqueting hall where he attends minutely to every matter of secrecy.[3] William also

has an account of Anlaf spying in Athelstan's camp, - an account which has a familiar ring about it:

> **Ille (Anlaf) qui tantum periculum imminere cerneret astu exploratoris munus agressus, depositis regiis insignibus assumptaque in manibus cythara, ad tentorium regi nostri progreditur; ubi cum prae foribus cantitans, interdum quoque quateret dulci resonantia fila tumultu, facile admissus est, professus mimum qui huiusmodi arte stipem quotidianam mercaretur. Regem et convivas musico acromate aliquantisper delinivit, cum inter psallendum omnia oculis scrutaretur. Postquam satietas adendi finem deliciis imposuisset et severitas administrandi belli in colloquio procerum recrudesceret, abire jussus pretium cantus accepit. Quod asportare nausians, sub se in terra defodit, ...**
>
> 4

In Geoffrey of Monmouth's writings, the story of the minstrel disguise is tranferred to an account of Baldulph, a Saxon who, having been defeated by the Britons under the command of Cador, Duke of Cornwall, is anxious to speak with his brother Colgrim besieged in York by King Arthur:

> **Cum ergo alterius modi aditum non haberet (Baldulphus), rasit capillos suos et barbam, cultumque joculatoris cum cythara cepit. Deinde intra castra deambulans modulis quos in lyra componebat sese cytharistam exhibebat, Cumque nulli suspectus esset, accesit ad moenia urbis paulatim ceptam simulationem faciens. Postremo cum ab inclusis compertus esset, tractus est funiculis intra muros; . . .**
>
> 5

Wace copies Geoffrey, attaching the story to Arthur, and adding a circumstance:

> **Al sege a lad cume jugelere,**
> **Si se feinst kil esteit harpere**
> **Il aveit apris à chanter**
> **E lais e notes à harper,**
> **Par aler parler à son frere.**
> **Si fist par mi la barbe rere,**
> **E le chef par me ensement**
> **E un des gernuns sulement,**
> **Ben sembla lecheur e fol.**
>
> 6

La3amon expands this still further. In his account, Baldulf had learned to harp skilfully in childhood, but he also jests and plays the fool. So convincing is he, that men respond to him as they would

to a real fool, striking him with wands and taunting him with derisory remarks.[7]

A story similar to the anecdotes concerning Alfred, Anlaf and Baldulf occurs in Saxo Grammaticus who died in 1204 and who used material from the ancient sagas. He tells how Hother, king of Sweden and Denmark, is at a disadvantage in his wars with Odin's son, Balder, because the latter has access to a strengthening food prepared for him by three nymphs. Upon deciding that he must equalise the contest by availing himself of the same food, he approaches the nymphs as a harper and plays so sweetly that he is rewarded with a girdle of victory.[8]

The story of minstrel disguise, then, occurs in accounts of kings, warriors and even gods, but often has little to do with history. The truest account of the life of the king with whom it has its earliest association in English tradition makes no reference to it. The way in which it transfers from "histories" to chronicles which are leaning heavily towards romance is witnessed by its appearance in the Arthurian stories of Geoffrey, Wace and Laȝamon. At any point in its progress it would have been available to the alert romancer.[9]

At the other extreme is the case of the romance Richard which, although it introduces certain marvellous elements to enhance the characterisation of the hero,[10] remains reasonably faithful to the events of the life of the king as they are recorded in the chronicles. The disguise episode described in the romance as occurring during the king's journey home from the Holy Land is in accordance with at least one reliable account in the writings of Ralph of Coggeshall:[11] only the details have been altered in the romance.

According to Ralph,[12] the King was returning from the Holy Land via Gazara, or Zara, in Dalmatia, where an encounter with the lord of the castle, in whose gift was the safe-conduct of travellers, prompted him to say that he was a merchant called Hugh; for safety, he claimed, he had joined a group of pilgrims led by Baldwin de Betun. He narrowly escaped from Zara and came to Vienna with William de Stagno, a German-speaking lad. William, being sent to the market, carelessly offered more money than was necessary for their provisions, and this was noticed. When he returned, this time with the King's gloves under his belt, he was arrested and questioned under the threat of torture. This was on the day of St. Thomas the Apostle, or 21st December, 1192. The information exacted by the magistrates was relayed to Leopold, Duke of Austria, who ordered that the King's retreat should be surrounded and the King be called upon to surrender.

The romance picks up the broad outline of this, or a similar account, and condenses the discovery episode, adding a detail in support of the minstrel profession. Initially, Richard, with Fulk Doyly and Sir Thomas Moulton, sails to the Holy Land to scout it for a military expedition to follow later. They dress as pilgrims:

> **"What j have ordeynyd in my þou3t?**
> **Þe Holy Lond to wende too.**
> **We three, wiþouten kny3tes moo;**
> **All in palmeres gyse,**
> **Þe Holy Lond for to devyse, ...**
>
> **(11.591 ff.).**

On their return they pass the "Greek sea" and come to Allmagne where they rest at a tavern and ill-advisedly order a large goose roasted in gravy. Attracted by the food, a female minstrel offers entertainment:

When they had drunken well afin,
A minstralle com therin,
And said "Gentlemen, wittily,
Will ye have any minstrelsey?"
Richard bade that she should go.
That turned him to mickle woe!
The minstralle took in mind,
And saith, "Ye are men unkind;
And if I may, ye shall for-think
Ye gave neither meat nor drink.
. . . . . .

She was English, and well true
By speech, and sight, and hide, and hue.

(11.663 ff.)

She goes to the king who commands all his knights to arm themselves and apprehend the three men in palmers' clothes.

Whether there is an implied comment here on Richard's coolness towards women or not is debatable: but the romancer has lost nothing in altering the circumstantial detail of the episode; rather he has gained an opportunity for a short moral on the inadvisability of dealing ungenerously with minstrels.[13]

The wearing of pilgrim dress was not unusual amongst those who wished to travel abroad unmolested, and Richard I was not the only individual to claim safe-conduct by attaching himself to a group of these pious travellers. Giraldus Cambrensis himself found it prudent to do so on an occasion when he was travelling home from a visit to Rome.[14]

An even earlier example of pilgrim disguise, however, is found in the accounts of miracles attached to the Vita Edwardi Regis during its revision between 1100 and 1124 A.D.[15] The story, originating with Ailred,[16] tells how Edward the Confessor, leading a procession of clergy and dignitaries to the consecration of a church in the name of St. John the Evangelist, was approached by a pilgrim:

> . . . . subito quidam in habitu peregrino clamabat ad regem, aliquid eleemosinae pro sancti Johannis amore sibi postulans impartiri. Injecit mox rex manum crumenae sed ille jam in opus simile omnia quae fuerant illata consumpserat. Instat peregrinus multiplicat preces. Vocat thesaurium rex, sed obsistente turba non assuit. Angebatur animo sanctus, & quid faceret ignorabat. Tandem anuli reminiscens qui digitum amiebat, festinanter abstractum peregrino perrexit. Ille tantae munificentiae gratias agens, vel recessit, vel disparuit.

It happens later that two pilgrims, returning to England from Jerusalem, meet a troupe of young men, dressed in white and carrying tapers. Among them is a dignified old man with snow-white hair who approaches them and addresses them with great courtesy. Upon learning that they are English and that Edward is their king, he offers them hospitality and, when the time comes, leads them safely out of the town and departs from them thus:

> . . . . hujusmodi verbis alloquitur. "Viri fratres, cum summa prosperitate vos repatriaturos non dubitetis, quoniam prosperum interfaciet vobis Deus salutarium nostrorum, & ego ob amorem regis vestri in omnia via hac qua gradiemini, firmabo super vos oculos meos. Ego enim sum Johannes Apostolus & Evangelista, . . . qui ipsum regem vestrum ob meritum castitatis summa dilectione complector, quem rogo vice mea salutetis: & ne deroget fidem oraculo, hunc ei anulum quem mihi in dedicatione ecclesiae meae in habitu peregrino apparenti tribuit resignate, ... " Dixit & statim viri in loco se quem ipsi delegerant invenerunt. Cum summa autem alacritate ad patriam revertentes, repraesentant anulum regi, exponunt oraculum, . . .

Two significant points emerge from this. First, this date, if correct, is an early one at which to find monastic writings carrying stories of pilgrim-disguise and ring-tokens, - motifs which were to become so familiar in romance. The possibility of this monastic writer being conversant with early Anglo-Norman romances might suggest itself, therefore. Secondly, bearing in mind the religious nature of the Vita and of this particular account, it is not difficult to find correspondences

in the visit of the Apostle with the appearance of Christ at the sepulchre, and as a stranger on the road, and on the seashore, after the Crucifixion.[17] This would suggest the possible influence of the New Testament on themes of disguise in literature rather than early romance influence on religious biography. The inclusion of the ring token does not detract from this view since the royal gift of a ring was common in the Middle Ages and is not restricted to examples in romance literature only. In whichever direction the reader is persuaded, this example of disguise and proof-of-identity belongs to the cleric, not the minstrel, and is evidence of an early relationship between religious and secular literature.[18]

Another early religious biography offers an example of disguise, - in this case, the disguise of a woman, - and certainly comes closer to the truth of what actually happened. It is the life of Christina of Markyate, a recluse born between 1096 and 1098, which was written at the instance of Robert Gorham, abbot of St. Alban's, who held office from 1155 to 1166.[19] A mid-twelfth-century composition such as this allows for romance influence; but unlike Ailred's story, the account of Christina's life is detailed and factual, and although the author does not make light of his subject's unorthodox behaviour and the unusual circumstances of her life, neither does he exaggerate or ask us to believe in the unlikely.

At the age of fourteen, or thereabouts, Christina took a private vow of chastity at St. Albans. Two years later, a marriage was arranged for her by her merchant-father who, when she repulsed her suitor, kept her in close custody for a year. While her case was being brought

before Robert Bloet, bishop of Lincoln, a hermit named Eadwin consulted with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Ralph d'Escures, on her behalf, and made provision for her escape and her sanctuary with Alfwen, the anchoress, at Flamstead. The writer recounts how she prepared herself for the journey in the clothes of a man, and how she was nearly discovered by her sister:

> **Sumptisque clauculo vestimentis virilibus que preparaverat sibi et eludens in sexum (virilem vestita cap) pa talari exivit foras. Quod (cum vidis) set germana sua Matildis (sci) licet properancius egredientem (nam eam) cognovit de vestibus: secuta (est e ves) tigio sororem. Animadvertens hoc (Christi) na: finxit se velle templum beate Ma(rie) semper virginis adire. Et dum iret (ecce una) de manicis fustanii quod oc (cul) te sub cappa gerebat cecidit in terram (sive) incuria gestantis sive industria nes(cio). Qua visa Matildis: ait. Quid est(hoc) Theodora unde verris terram? At il(la) blande dixit ad eam. Cara mihi (so)ror accipe regrediensque deferto do(mum) quoniam impedit me. Et baiulavit illi bombicinum clavesque patris: . . . .**
>
> 20

Without Talbot's editing the story of Christina reads thus:

> Sumptisque clauculo vestimentis virilibus que preparaverat sibi et eludens in sexum virilem vestita cappa talari exivit foras. Quod cum vidisset germana sua Matildis scilicet properancius egredientem nam eam cognovit de vestibus: secuta est e vestigio sororem. Animadvertens hoc Christina: finxit se velle templum beate Marie semper virginis adire. Et dum iret ecce una de manicis fustanii quod occulte sub cappa gerebat sive industria nescio. Qua visa Matildis: ait. Quid est hoc Theodora unde verris terram? At illa blande dixit ad eam. Cara mihi soror accipe regrediensque deferto domum quoniam impedit me. Et baiulavit illi bombicinum clavesque patris: . . .
>
> Quid fugitiva moraris? Quid sexum feminei veneris? Virilem animum indue et more viri in equum ascende. Dehinc abiecta pusillanimitate: viriliyer super equum saliens atque calcaribus eius latera pungens famulo dixit. Sequere me a tergo . . . Illic a venerabili inclusa Alfuen suscepta Christina cum gaudio eadem die pro religionis habitu asperam induebatur tunicam que sericis vestimentis et delicatis variarum pelliciarum deliciis in patris domo consueverat uti.

an interesting comparison with Melior's departure from a similar situation, in the guise of a boy, in William of Palerne. [21] Even

more interesting is the significance of the change of state brought out in a comparison of Christina's former luxurious clothing with the rough habit she now takes on. The style and sentiment are not at all unlike the longer and more elaborate contemplation of the Orfeo-poet upon the beggarly life and appearance of the king in the wilderness:

> **He þat hadde y-werd þe fowe & griis,**
> **& on bed þe purper biis**
> **- Now on hard hebe he liþ,**
> **Wiþ leues & gresse he him wriþ.**
> **He pat hadde had castels & tours,**
> **Riuer, forest, friþ wiþ flours**
> **- Now, þei it comenci to snewe & frese,**
> **Þis king mot make his bed in mese.**
>
> **22**

The wearing of men's clothing is an obvious method for facilitating a woman's escape, particularly if she, like Christina, intends to journey on horse-back. This is probably the explanation for the male disguise of Queen Eleanor when she attempted to join her sons fled from Henry's court to Paris, in 1173. Her attempt was thwarted when she was recognised by one of the king's patrols, and she was imprisoned thereafter at her husband's pleasure for the rest of his life.[23]

A very rare instance occurs in the chronicle of Walter of Guisborough, however, of a woman who not only disguised herself in male attire, but took up the profession of military spy under Prince Edward, later King Edward I. Her information was crucial to the defeat of Simon de Montfort at Evesham in 1265, and the chronicler pauses to name her, - Margot, - and to fashion for her the feminine noun "exploratrix".

After a year of governing England in the name of Henry III, de Montfort was unlucky enough to lose a vital captive, Prince Edward, who escaped from custody in Hereford and joined the Marcher lords with whom

he had been secretly negotiating. De Montfort summoned his army from south Wales and requested his son to come to his aid. The information that these supporting forces had camped at Kenilworth was discovered by Margot, and allowed the Prince to march from Worcester in time to disable them:

> **Qui (filius suus) coadunatis multis fere. xx. banerectis et plebe multa, fecit aliquantisper stacionem apud castrum de Kenelworth, et inde digressus spoliavit Wyntoniam, et iterum reversus est ad Kenelworth. Nunciatumque est hoc Edwardo filio regis per exploratorem suum Margoth que cum mulier esset in veste tamen virili velud homo gradiebatur, et per Radulphum de Ardern qui cum esset ex parte altera consocios tamen prodiit et decepit. Eratque tunc Edwardus apud Wurcestr' quam post Glowcestriam paulo ante devicerat, et accepto nuncio consurgens de nocte abiit et pervenit ad locum quem preordinaverat exploratrix ipsa ad arm-andum se; . . . . . .**
>
> **24**

Edward surprised the army while it was sleeping. Simon the younger was one of the few to escape unharmed. His father, however, was left without support and was killed at Evesham when his army suffered a devastating defeat at Edward's hands.

Female spies do not feature in the romances, but there are examples of female minstrels in Richard, where the King is betrayed by a "minstralle", and in Sir Beues, where Josian, who knows the art of music, disguises herself as a minstrel in order to earn her living.[25]

Although a late record, a story of a woman who wished to petition the King occurs in the chronicle of John de Trokelowe. He tells how the woman, otherwise unable to approach the King, took advantage of the custom of admitting all minstrels and entertainers to the court on

feast days and on any occasion of great solemnity. On this occasion, Edward II was celebrating the feast of Pentecost in the great hall at Westminster in 1317:

> **Cui in Aula Westmonasterii, die Pentecostes, ad mensam cum suis magnatibus recumbenti, quaedam mulier, ornatu histrionali redimita, equum bonum, histrionaliter phaleratum, ascensa,dictam Aulam intravit, mensas more histrionum circuivit, ad descum per gradus ascendit, mensae regiae audacter appropinquavit, quamdam litteram coram Rege posuit, et, retracto freno, salutatis hospitibus, absque strepitu vel impedimento eques discessit.**

When the porters were rebuked for admitting her, they replied:

> **. . . . non esses moris regii, alicui menestrallo, Palatium intrare volenti, in tanta solemnitate aditum denegare.**
>
> 26

Possibly the woman, by 1317, had heard all the romances and was inspired to emulate the daring of Tristan, Horn and Bevis. On the other hand, since she had a serious matter in hand, it is not unlikely that she, like many before her and many, surely, before the heroes of romance, availed herself of this undeniable means to come to the sovereign and be heard. In this case, romance would be following historical precedent rather than the other way about.

It has already been noted that although it is not uncommon to find examples of women in disguise in romances, particularly posing as men,[27] the disguise of men as women, featuring strongly in popular tales and traditions, is almost never found in romance.[28] The extent to which romancers seemed deliberately to eschew this apparently obvious device emerges from a comparison of their neglect of it with the manifest appetite with which the chroniclers fell upon one,

initially probable, instance of it concerning one of the less-loved princes of the church. The accounts, three of them, deal with the escape of John's chancellor, William Longchamp, bishop of Ely, from Dover in the dress of a woman, in the Autumn of 1191. Hugo de Nonant, bishop of Coventry and John's chief propagandist, first notes the escape of the man who was left as Justiciar in King Richard's absence. He then makes sure that it features in the chronicle of Benedict of Peterborough who acknowledges his indebtedness and claims that he has written it as it was given by Hugo, - "in hac forma scripsit". Benedict's story is economical, but does not omit details about the fugitive's discovery and a comment on his attitude towards women:

> **Cancellarius ille de abjectione sua confusus transfretare proposuit, et accedens ad Dovere, novum transfretandi modum invenit. Depositis namque masculorum vestimentis, foeminarum indumentis se induit, quarum sexum semper odit; et sic ad littus accedens transfretare voluit. Sed comperta malitia sua, quaedam mulieres injecerunt manus in eum et male tractaverunt.** [29]

Needless to say, by the time we read it in Giraldus' account, we have not only the stratagem, the discovery and the incarceration; there is also a picture of an evil man of the church dressed in harlot's clothing instead of the sacred vestments of his office, suffering, on a deserted beach, the excited advances of a half-naked fisherman. The episode is too accomplished a work of fiction not to quote in full:

> **Eliensis igitur, cum aliquot deibus in castro Dovorensi, quo diverterat, moram fecisset, miram metaphoram et exquisitam fraudem excogitans, se foeminam simulavit et vestem sacerdotis in habitum convertit meretricis; fideique pariter immemor et honesti, vel potius contemptor, quoniam aperte non poterat, sub habitu foemineo transfretare parabat vel occulte. Assumens itaque peplum in capite, et tunicam viridem enormiter longam, et capam ejusdem coloris manicatam, pedes ad littus a castro descendit. Ut autem efficacius assumpto hujuscemodi sub fuco lateret, lineam telam in laeva, virgam institoris dextra praeferens, mulierem mercatricem, ne dicam meretricem, se simulavit. Tunicam itaque foemineam indutus pro tunica sacerdotis hyacinthina, capam habens manicatam pro planeta, peplum in capite pro mitra, virgam**

> mensoriam pro baculo pastorali, telam pro textu evangelico, seu potius manipulo, portans, talibus ornatus antistes ad mare descendit. Et cum in littore residens, Euro ad vota spirante, horam navigandi praestolaretur; ecce piscator, qui nudus forte de mari jam venerat, retiaque siccanda per littus exposuerat, videns eum vel eam solam sedentem, reputans scortum esse, calefieri cupiens, celerius accurrit; et statim laeva collum ejus amplectens, dextra coepit inferiora rimari. Sed protinus ministri ejusdem et servi, qui non procul astabant, dolum non ignorantes, accesserunt; et modesta quadam violentia eum repelentes, increpaverunt etiam ut taceret. Interim autem exiens a villa mulier quaedam ad littus, et videns lineum pannum quem gestabat, propius accessit; et putans venalem esse, coepit de pretio diligenter inquirere. Et cum ille non respondisset, quoniam Anglicae linguae peritiam non habebat, continuo supervenit et alia mulier, cum instantia magna illud idem inquirens. Cum autem nullum eis responsum dedisset, sed potius subrideret, sicut semper in dolo consueverat, coeperunt inter se mulieres admirari, et quaerere quidnam esset; et tandem dolum suspicantes, extenderunt manus ad peplum quo facies tota usque in oculos velebatur, et submittentes a naso usque deorsum, viderunt faciem hominis nigram noviterque rasam; et conterritae prae admiratione muliebriter vociferare et proclamare coeperunt: "Venite, videte monstrum quod deformavit utrumque sexum, virum scilicet sub muliere latentem." Et statim factus est concursus virorum ac mulierum magnus, avellentium peplum de capite, ipsumque prostratum ad terram per caputium et manicas turpiter trahentium, corona simul et fraude detecta. Servientes autem sui bis aut ter impetum fecerunt in turbam, ut eum liberarent, sed praevalente populo non potuerunt. Ipse vero coronam, quam paulo ante tegebat, palam ostendens, alta voce clamabat se presbyterum esse et episcopum, rogans et supplicans ut cum ipso ordinis et dignitatis intuitu mitius ageretur. Illi vero nihilominus ipsum verbis dehonestantes, sputis, alapis et verberibus afflictum, lapidum, perque plateas omnes tractum turpiter, et sic tractatum tandem eum in cellario tenebroso quasi sub carcerali custodia concluserunt.
>
> 30

It need hardly be said that small credence can reasonably be given to the colourful detail in this chronicler's version of the event. There is little doubt that Longchamp's honesty and discipline found small favour with John, and that he was forced to flee incognito: he was quickly replaced by Walter of Coutances sent home urgently from Sicily by Richard who hoped to contain his brother's intrigues.[31]

There was good reason and opportunity, therefore, for John's servants to discredit this man by means of lewd and derisive tales. That he travelled as a woman may or may not be true: the suggestion smacks of malice; but then again women, like pilgrims, were assured of free passage in times of trouble, and were even used as messengers between opposing forces for this reason.[32] What is certain is that there is real evidence of an escape in disguise, which has been expanded with details about the nature of the disguise, and has subsequently been fashioned into an almost unrecognisable episode of cunning and subterfuge deservedly discovered in the most disgraceful circumstances, - an episode which could, with some omissions, have been translated in its prefabricated state straight into a romance. The literary enthusiasm with which this example of disguise has been treated by the monastic writers exceeds the zeal of political duty; and yet the romance writers, with one very minor exception taken from classical material, never deal with it.[33] The same observation has been made in connection with the feminine disguise of men found in popular tales and traditions.[34]

The conclusion to be drawn from the reluctance in the romance poets towards this device compared with the eagerness in the chroniclers engaged in propaganda and defamation in their use of it is that this is a disguise for the use of men who are in some way morally deficient; and that no poetic hero would shame and demean himself in the exploitation of it. Not even for the purposes of laughter can the comedy of romance be so broadened; heroes can dress as bears, pose as fops, serve as menials and behave as fools, but to the medieval way of thinking a man who dresses as a woman casts away the one quality which all other forms of disguise, comic or not, still reserve to themselves, - the continuing ability to command respect.

Disguise as a fool was, however, not considered unbecoming to the dignity of the romance hero. On the contrary, those who employ the device [35] appear to possess a more sophisticated wisdom than others and can make dupes of whomsoever they please. Matthew Paris records the story of an Englishman who acted as interpreter for the King of Hungary and who saved his own life by pretence to idiocy.

Before he was thirty years old this man had been banished (presumably from England) and had lost all his money and goods in the city of Acre. By the onset of winter, nothing remained to him but a shirt of sackcloth, a horsehair cape and a pair of shoes made of ox-hide. He cropped his hair like a buffoon and, when approached, uttered inarticulate cries as if he were dumb. Thus he managed to pass through many countries, supported by the kindness and sympathy of common folk until he found better fortune.[36]

Matthew also records a more sinister story of an attempt on the life of the King in 1238 in which madness was used as a pretext to come near the court. On an occasion when the King was at Woodstock, an unnamed man described as a learned esquire came to the court calling wildly upon the King to resign his kingdom to him, for he had been unjustly usurped, he said, and bore the king-mark upon his shoulder. The man was pitied and given lodging for the night. He was discovered in the hours of darkness attempting to seek the King and, when questioned, admitted that he had been hired by William, son of Geoffrey Marsh, to find access to the King and assassinate him. He was subsequently torn to pieces by horses at Coventry: but his deception had nearly succeeded.[37]

Pretence to madness or foolishness does not occur in the romances

in the context of such life-or-death issues as these. But men have of old encouraged foolishness, sympathy or relaxation of vigilance in others in this way and so have gained their ends. This common experience of man's social behaviour, though coloured with humour and given a greater complexity within the narrative structure, is what lies behind the disguise of Ipomodon and Geffrey.

Conclusion

Evidence suggests that the records kept by the monasteries were not always necessarily "historical". The romance of Richard, and the account of his disguise, follows closely the chronicled records of the king's life, and there is nothing to suggest that these records were not near the truth. Richard, however, stands alone in taking an episode of disguise from recorded historical fact.

Many chronicles which contain "true" accounts of disguise are works, like those of Geoffrey of Monmouth, or Wace, or Giraldus, which themselves contain so strong an admixture of fiction that they come closer to romance than history. Whether this is because the authors were also readers of romance, or whether their literary energies were politically motivated towards invention rather than accuracy cannot be said for sure. Certainly the development of the Alfred stories and the obvious prevarication concerning William Longchamps demonstrates the impetus towards the glorification of ancestors and the defamation of enemies; and the inclusion of what were to become familiar romance motifs in the work of so early a writer as Ailred might suggest that the association between religious and secular literature, including romance or the legends which nourished romance, has a very long history

indeed. The echoes in Ailred's account of the miracle of St. John from passages in the New Testament recording the appearances of Christ after the Resurrection, together with the early date of this cleric's work, leave open the possibility that some influences on romance poets using the disguise motif lie within the Bible itself.

A middle category of historical or chronicle influences is formed by those accounts which may not be wholly true but which cannot, alternatively, be denied, and which describe common or rational human behaviour in individual circumstances. The accounts of Matthew Paris belong to this group; so, too, do the stories of women employing disguise. Examples from the romances may be taken from them or from the stock of human experience, often not altogether predictable, from which the chroniclers themselves drew their material.

The example from Giraldus' work, itself derived from chronicles and elaborated upon, bears out an observation made in the discussion in the previous chapter on the influence of popular tales upon the romance poets, i.e. that although the romances deal with every variety of disguise, and although the disguise of women as men seems to be a fitting one, the feminine disguise of the hero, even in perilous circumstances, is only once and in a very minor way employed. Giraldus' (or Hugo de Nonant's) exploitation of this device suggests that in contemporary society it was considered base and contemptible and, if comic at all, derisory rather than humorous.

CHAPTER 4

SOME ORIGINS OF DISGUISE IN MYTH AND RITUAL

The romancers were not anthropologists, nor were they, consciously, social psychologists; and no attempt is made here to press a claim that the poets purposely sought survivals of magical and religious practices, or sublimated literary forms of these practices, with which to furnish their work. It is evident, though, from the discussion in the previous chapter, that even amongst writers of repute and, apparently, conscience, the inclusion of pretence and invention did not necessarily invalidate the "facts". Similarly in romance, primitive customs, "games" of religious significance and literary echoes of worship and ritual entered easily and un-selfconsciously into the familiar romance narratives of love and war. All was embraced within a single imaginative understanding, and all was grist to the mill.

Customs and games involving disguise, dressing in colours, the avoidance of naming, and shape-changing are usually fossilized elements of ritual or of behaviour governing taboo words and objects in primitive societies. They survive in folk memory, but their early significance is not always understood. Alteration or adaption of the original form is therefore allowable, but the sense of mystery and of the unexplained, often (though not always) a feature of romance, is kept. The indirect influence of ritual on the romances is via the myth and folk literature. It can be argued that in some cases myth is an elaborate verbalisation of ritual, in itself a formalised dramatic type. Thus, in the case of disguise, the man who adopts a dress or wears specific symbols in order to peform or signify his function in ritual is described, in terms of

myth, as a disguised hero or an unnamed leader; the rites he performs within the magical or religious context are sublimated in myth and later become adventures and feats in the heroic and marvellous scenes of romance. Whole sequences of disguised action or themes of unknown identity come ready-made. Celtic myths, whose influence upon romance is not yet wholly defined yet not doubted, provide examples of this transformation of ritual into literature.

a) The Direct Influence of Rites, Customs and Games.

Elements of ritual and some customs and games of magical and religious origin enter the romances as forms of disguise but are separated from their original significance. Thus the blacking of faces, common in the mumming tradition and probably part of Celto-Teutonic or Graeco-Roman religious processions, appears in Guy of Warwick and King Horn as a simple means to witholding identity. Similarly, the refusal to name oneself, associated in early belief with the protection of the self or the spirit, becomes a device in at least six romances to protect identity: in eleven romances names are changed to the same end. The disguise of green and the challenge, incognito, to the beheading game cannot, in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, be said to have entirely left its magical associations, since witchcraft and supernatural knowledge are important in the romance. But the Gawain poet has combined two, and at an earlier period distinct, traditions and has placed them in a game/assay context. The game of "pluck-buffet", or blow-returned-for-blow, is also found as a test of valour in Richard and in other English and French romances. Shape-shifting occurs in romance in association with magical practices in Arthur and Merlin, in the two Alexander romances and in Sir Gawain.

It is not always found, however, as part of the ritual or religious magic which provided its origins. The werwolf legends, which furnish one of the themes in William of Palerne, may have originated in shape-changing magic or in ancient customs associated with the punishment of law-breakers and the life of the outlaw. Disguise as bears and as deer in the same romance is probably suggested by the werwolf stories.

Guy of Warwick, on his way to Pavia to avenge himself on Duke Otouns, blackens his face and hair thus:

> **An vnement purchast he**
> **Þat made his visage out of ble:**
> **His here, þat was 3alu and bri3t,**
> **Blac it bicome anon ri3t.**
>
> **(11.6105 ff.)**

So, too, does Horn, glancing about him "wiþ his colmie snute" (l.1082), before he joins the feast at Rymenhild's wedding. The history of this disguise in Middle English literature goes back at least as far as the Gesta Herwardii in which Hereward uses the same device,[1] and probably originates in the mumming tradition in which some or all of the mummers blackened their faces to prevent themselves being known. In the royal mumming performed for Richard II before his accession in 1377, an elaborate masking was conceived: men came before the King as esquires, knights, a pope and as cardinals, all masked with black visors.[2] Ordinary village-folk observing the custom seem to have rubbed substances into their skin, like Guy, and to have processed with some kind of dance-step. Chambers suggests that the Morris or "Moorish" dance was so called not because of its cultural origins, but because of the Moorish appearance of its participants.[3] The single black-faced Morris dancer, often a fool, is a survival of this special guise. The early association with music is a possible explanation of the blacking of faces by some minstrels (cf. Horn and Hereward): Ritson recounts the story of John

of Rampayne who disguised himself as a minstrel thus as late as 1502.[4] Miss Welsford thinks that mummers and black-faced dancers were deliberately taking the part of the sacred fool.[5] She suggests that the idea of "possession" may lie behind the covering of faces since, in magic, the wearing of a mask is the means to contacting the being in whose image the mask is made. Maskers thus identified with ancestral spirits in Egyptian funerals, for example. A survival of the colouring of the fool is found as late as the sixteenth century in Redford's Wit and Science (written about 1540), which could draw upon this allusion to foolishness, - by that time semantically closer to stupidity, - when Idleness blackens the face of Honest Recreation to show how obscured his wit has become.[6] An impression of witlessness, or untouchability, as well as the concealment of features, may well lie behind the endeavours of Guy and Horn.

If Chamber's theory is correct,[7] and the mumming tradition itself originates in the sophisticated celebrations (including masked processions) of the Kalendae, then the blacking of fools and minstrels has come far indeed to find its way into romance. That this is not impossible, however, is evidenced by the influence of mumming upon early English drama and the distant link between classical ritual and the court masque.[8]

One of the most common devices used to disguise the individual in romance has origins whose antiquity cannot be guessed at. It is the simple refusal to divulge the true name. In some examples of romance no name is given.[9] Even more examples can be found where the true name is concealed and a false name is used.[10] English romance furnishes no examples where, like Chrétien de Troyes' Le Chevalier de la Charrete, for example, the identity of the hero is witheld even from the audience.

The superstition concerning the magic power of names has long

been known about, and springs from ancient times when, as Freud comments, words were treated "in every sense as things", and the name was "an essential part of a man's personality. . . . an important possession".[11] It became vital to those who believed in the power of spirits to protect a name even more closely than they protected other precious things. The personal name, even the names of relatives, became taboo words in themselves.[12] It is quite likely that, in telling stories about their gods, primitive men, like the writers of early Semitic literature, used an indirect name or no name at all.

In no English romance can one find any magical association with names, but the very special importance attached to naming, and the specific relationship of name to person as Freud describes it, can easily be seen in the naming of Degaré and Tristan, and in the re-naming (by the individual herself) of the heroine Emaré.[13] Moreover, when the two groups of romances in which the name is significant in the disguise are analysed (see nn.9 and 10), a strong pattern of circumstance emerges.

Only in Le Morte Arthur, ll.1492 ff., Sir Beues, ll.2805 ff., Kyng Alisaunder, ll.7464 ff., and Sir Tristrem, ll.532 and 1215 ff., do the heroes withold or change their names in order to deal with the exigencies of the immediate situation, i.e. they are involved in rescue, escape or other necessary deception; in the first example in Sir Tristrem the hero does not know his real identity. In all other romances in the group, the unidentified hero or heroine completes a journey, or a task, or a period of testing or education before the true name is confessed or taken up again. In King Edward and Rauf Coilyear, the definition of

the king and emperor as "heroes" is weak, but a sophisticated version of the pattern still remains. In most of these romances, the testing period includes some form of conflict. In Le Morte Arthur, ll.143 ff., Morte Arthure, ll.2620 ff., Sowdone of Babylon, ll.1135 ff., and Sir Ferumbras, ll. 440 ff., the knight denies his name immediately before single combat, and declares it upon victory. In Ipomadon, Sir Isumbras, Sir Beues, King Horn and Sir Eglamour, the hero does not regain his name until he has gained or re-discovered his lady; with the rôles reversed, the same is true of Emaré.[14]

All this being so, it is difficult not to be persuaded that the importance of concealing one's name, found in many romances, has less to do with the diminution of risk, escape, - the hiding of identity in fact, - than with the proving of the fitness to own a special identity. This in turn points again to memories of a more primitive society where the true name was given in sacred rituals upon the achievement of maturity and/or after a period of proving or initiation. That these weak echoes should have lingered in medieval romance is no more surprising than the fact that they are still heard in modern, even "scientific" fiction: the definition of identity and the means of achieving it, as found in the myths and folk-tales available to the romancers, would have been as satisfying to the unconscious imagination of poet and audience alike as it is to author and reader to-day. The omission of these profound and ancient themes might have been more remarkable.

In the context of the influence of myth and ritual, the romance of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is particularly interesting since the

challenge of the disguised knight contains two ancient traditions which, in all other instances, seem to have been kept apart. The first is the game of "pluck-buffet", or the practice of duelling by alternate blows.[15] This was an ancient and widespread method of fighting whose origins are obscure but are clearly connected with the notion of honour and worth. In considering the importance of the head-blow in particular, it is worth noting J. Pitt-Rivers who comments that the payment of honour in daily life "is accorded through the offering of precedence ..... and through the demonstrations of respect which are commonly associated with the head". He observes that it is the head of the person who is honoured which is used to demonstrate his status, "whether it is adorned, dressed in a distinctive way, prohibited to be touched or even if it is to be chopped off."[16] The Gawain-poet was by no means the only one to describe this ancient challenge; nor was he the first. One of the earliest accounts of it is to be found in Saxo Grammaticus' story of Agnar's death at the hands of Bjarke:[17] the Irish stories of Finn and Lorcan and Fled Bricend, almost certainly older than the 1100 A.D. manuscript in which they are copied, contain such fights and so, in romance, do La Mule Sans Freine and von Zatzihkoven's Lanzelet.[18] In other English romances the enchanted Turk in Turk and Gawain uses this challenge to draw Gawain to his castle to help him towards his own release from the magic bond; and in Richard, the King is taunted and challenged to the contest by Ardour, the son of King Modred, by whom Richard is captured and imprisoned in Germany; by this means Richard is able to prove his valour, even in captivity. In Sir Gawain, however, the challenge is, unusually, a disguised one, and into this disguise comes the second ancient tradition, - that of dressing in green.[19]

Chambers enumerates many European customs in which "Jack-in-Green",

"wild men" and similar individuals who make a garment of their gods and spirits, cover themselves in boughs, moss and leaves and participate in ceremonial enactments of the rhythmical changes of the seasons.[20] In most of these "games" the green man is hunted, caught and executed, but is later brought back to life. Frazer notes an example where the King of the Wood, dressed in green and living in a lodge of fir-tree boughs, is hunted, but, if he shows unusual strength and agility, is allowed to keep his office for another year.[21]

Chambers' examples are limited to local customs in small areas of Europe; but in 1309 the King of the Greenwood makes an appearance at the great Tournament of Stepney, "de quo dominus Egedius Argentein dicebatur rex de Vertbois; et ipse, cum suis complicibus, fuit contra omnes venientes, . . ."[22] Withington suggests that vertbois means more than green accoutrements; "perhaps a forest-tree was figured in the knight's shield; perhaps in place of a plume he wore a green bough ..."[23] But the Annales Paulini insists that this was the "rex de viridi bosco",[24] rather than a knight in green carrying a recognisable device: and since by this date the tournament had already acquired the characteristics of the masquerade, with knights "dressing-up" in highly elaborate guises,[25] it is not unlikely that this was a very lively representation of the folk character familiar to every spectator. It is also probable that both the tournament and the romance of Sir Gawain were prompted by folk stories and customs rather than that the tournament was recalling the Green Knight, as Withington suggests.[26]

Sir Gawain is the only English metrical romance to model a character on the King of the Greenwood, or the Green Man, and it is

also the only romance to combine this ancient figure with the beheading game. Miss Welsford concludes that the poet's story "looks like an account of an agricultural rite that has been misunderstood".[27] There appears to be no such single rite, however, and very little evidence that the poet was trying to "understand" either of the separate rites which are echoed in the encounter with the Green Knight and in the challenge. Again, possibly because the stranger is not merely dressed in greenery from the wood like any village man taking part in some seasonal festivity, but <u>is</u>, magically, green, scholars seem to wish to interpret the figure and to reach a meaning beyond what the poet actually tells us about him.[28]

It is arguable, though, that the consciousness of the fourteenth century had no greater access to the entire significance of ancient religious and magical practice than we have six hundred years later; and that in them, as in us, the historical remnants of these mysteries prompted curiosity and a distant awe, but not analysis and understanding. This intellectual and emotional removal allowed the Gawain-poet to take these two familiar traditions and to marry them, arbitrarily in terms of their anthropological origins. His purpose was a literary and contemporarily cultural one in setting a game of chivalric worth and honour against a background of elemental magic. The simple tradition of "pluck-buffet" and the model of the Green Man were materials ready-to-hand. What provokes us to seek explanations for them is the extraordinary artistry with which they are developed and depicted in the narrative, and the very intention of the poet, evident in his denial of those explanations, that we should find an unanswered mystery.[29] The questions which remain are arguably a deliberate manufacture to which the literary use of only partially explicable behaviour and phenomena contribute.

In this the Gawain-poet is typical of a profession which took material wherever it might best find it and adapted it to an already-defined purpose. To a later age was left the task of relating myth and ritual to present experience in multi-level symbolism, and the search for universal significance in "archetypal" figures and stories.

Sir Gawain also contains, in the final confession of the Green Knight, and by way of an answer to Gawain's question about his true identity, some allusion to a knowledge of magical arts and to shape-changing. In his account of his actions, he describes Merlin's powers of enchantment and Morgan la Fay's powerful use of them to transform him from Bercilak to the terrifying supernatural being who tests the pride and valour of the Round Table. There is also some suggestion that Morgan has temporarily taken another shape herself:

> **Bercilak de Hautdesert I hat in þis londe.**
> **Þur3 my3t of Morgne la Faye, þat in my hous lenges,**
> **And koyntyse of clergye, bi craftes wel lerned -**
> **Þe maystrēs of Merlyn mony ho hat3 taken;**
> **For ho ha3t dalt drwry ful dere sumtyme**
> **With þat conable klerk, þat knowes alle your kny3tes at hame;**
> **Morgne þe goddes**
> **Þerfore hit is hir name:**
> . . . . . .
>
> **Ho wayned me vpon þis wyse to your wynne halle**
> **For to assay þe surquidrē, 3if hit soth were**
> **Þat rennes of þe grete renoun of þe Rounde Table;**
> **Ho wayned me þis wonder your wyttes to reue,**
> . . . . . .
>
> **Þat is ho þat is at home, þe auncian lady;**
>
> **(11.2445 ff.)**

The shape-shifting powers of Merlin are directly described in the earlier romance, Arthur and Merlin,[30] where Uterpendragon, seeking him for advice, encounters him in several guises. He first sends his courtiers to find him; and he appears to them as a beggar with a long beard (11.1931 ff.). The King then goes to the forest to meet him and

finds first a hogsherd (l.1979), then a chapman (l.1987), and then a fair swain (l.1985), - each of them a transformation of the enchanter. In this episode Merlin's arts are not explained:[31] but later, as Merlin transforms Uterpendragon , a servant and himself in order to help the King to Ygerne's bed, the poet describes what the magician does and, after the begetting of Arthur, tells how he restores them and himself to their former states:

Herbes he sou3t and fond
And gnidded hem bitwix his hond
Þe king he smerd viis and liche
And made þe king Tintagel liche
Himselven he made like Iudains
Þat was þe lordes chaumberlains
Vlfin he made liche Bretel, ...

(11.2513 ff.)

Merlin þo went to a broke
Þe king wiþ water þer he wesche
His owhen stat he hadde ywis
And seþþen he wesche hem boþe to
Her owen stat þai hadden also, . .

(11.2582 ff.)

This story of Merlin is first related by Geoffrey of Monmouth,[32] whose account of Merlin is compared by F.R. Somerset with the depiction of Mephistopheles in Faust, Athene in the Odyssey, and Loki in Norse mythology, in that he repeatedly appears "in unexpected disguises ..... urging the other characters to deeds, usually of violence."[33] He suggests that these characters and most shape-shifters are related to the Spielman, a traditional European folk-figure and a survivor of early ritual drama. The use of the Spielman in Reinhard's play, The Miracle, clearly defines his function. He appears in the drama in a different guise in each act: he initiates all dramatic development by goading the other characters into action; that action always leads to the ruin and downfall of the characters. The rôle, Somerset suggests, " is ostensibly that of a minor character (but) is really that of prompter and stage-manager".[34] This would certainly fit in with the function and history of Merlin and Morgan la Fay and would suggest that

shape-shifting in the earliest literature is associated with forces more powerful and sinister than mere magical versatility; is, in fact, a form of disguise which, when taken on, preludes events leading to disaster and tragedy.

In later stories, as in the romance of Kyng Alisaunder, the negative force of the magic is weakened, though the art is placed in the power of an evil man. It is by means of shape-changing that Neptabanus avenges himself on Philip of Macedon, and magically begets the hero Alexander on Queen Olympias. He appears to her not as a human being, but in monstrous animal form, with the upper part of the body like that of a ram, and the lower like that of a dragon. The poet describes the astrologer's art in very great detail:

Herbes he took in on herbere,
And stamped hem in a mortere,
And wronge it out in a boxe,
And after he took virgyne waxe
And made a popet after þe queene.
His aristable he gan vnwri3en.
Þe quenes name in þe wexe he wroot
Whiles it was sumdel hoot.
Jn a bed he it di3th,
And al aboute candel- li3th,
And spraynde þere-on of þe herbes juse;
And þus charmed Neptenabus. **(11.331. ff.)**

In the later version of this episode, in Alexander A (11.716 ff.), the importance of the shape-changing magic is diminished still further, and the poet describes only the necromancer's disguise as a god achieved with "wiles of witchcraft and wicked deedes", - this being an unelaborated translation of Archbishop Leo's Historia.[35]

As has already been pointed out,[36] the Alexander A poet

demonstrates, by his adherence to, and departure from, the Latin source, a preoccupation not with shape-changing magic and its early associations with heralded disaster, but with the engendering of a world-hero by means of a magic both dazzling and powerful, and accompanied by the triumphant prophesy, "Forthy keeper of care is conceived now!" (l.1744). The marvellous begetting of victory rather than the setting-in-train of ruin and downfall is what is described here; accordingly, the poet follows his author but does no more. The Kyng Alisaunder poet, it could be assumed, is also conscious of the significance of the importance attaching to Alexander's conception.

It has to be asked, then, why he devotes such care to a description of negative magic where another writer passes quickly across it. The answer could well lie in the temperament of the author and in the general tenor of the work. It cannot go unnoticed that in this romance the enthusiasm for witty deception in general and disguise (both successful and compromised) in particular is very great, and that the portrait of the conqueror includes the trait of ingenuity attended by a certain humour: Alexander's delight in duping kings, queens and princes by means of changed appearance, on repeated occasions[37] and where there is no pressing circumstance, surely proceeds from the author himself. The story of Neptabanus' vengeance offered a prefabricated instance of magical deception on which the imaginative invention of the poet took hold. The Kyng Alisaunder poet, like the author of Alexander A, therefore, puts stories of magical practice to his own specific use and ignores (if he ever knew them) pre-existing meanings and significance. The two join the Gawain-poet and other romancers who preserve and fossilize elements of ritual, not as conservationists, but as artists for whom every speck of material, explained or not, furnishes an idea, a theme

or a story.

Related to the shape-changing magic discussed in the last-mentioned poems is the single example in English metrical romances of the transformation of a man into a werwolf. It occurs in William of Palerne, a translation of an Anglo-Norman work, and forms the groundwork of the story. Briefly, Alphonus' step-mother, Braunde, wishing her own son to be the heir to the King of Spain, casts a spell upon Alphonus so that he is turned into a werwolf. The poet describes in what manner this is done:

> **a noyement anon sche made of so grete strengþe,**
> **bi enchaunmens of charmes þat euel chaunche hire tide,**
> **þat whan þat womman þer-wi3te hadde þat worli child**
> **ones wel anoynted þe child wel al abowte,**
> **he wex to a werwolf wi3tly þer-after,**
> **al þe making of man so mysse hadde 3he schaped.**
> **(11.136 ff.)**

The possibilities for the origins of this theme are confusing, but not totally obscure. It is sometimes argued that changes into a werwolf were by way of being simply a branch of shape-shifting magic. Madden, in the Preface to his 1832 edition of the romance, notes very early references to the practice: in Herodotus, the Neurians are said to change themselves into werwolves once a year for a few days at a time; and both Virgil and Ovid relate the story of Lycaon, the King of Arcadia, changed by Jupiter into a wolf.[38] Skeat also quotes Karl Simrock who notes the following:

> **By the help of a magic girdle or ring men could change themselves and others into the forms of beasts; into wolves, bears, horses, cats, swans, geese, ravens and crows. The most notorious and perhaps the oldest of these changes is that into the Werwolf or loupgarou. Even this might be classed amongst the instances of Rune-magic, for runic characters may have been scratched upon the girdle or ring, or magic formularies may have been repeated whilst putting it on.**
> **39**

Skeat also observes, though, - having at the back of his mind the Norman origin of the story and its Sicilian location - that the belief in werwolves in the southern provinces of Europe "may have been partly derived through the medium of the Northmen, among whom . . . it was very general".[40] To support this, Baring-Gould[41] finds several instances in Norse literature. Striking is the example in Hrolf's Saga Kraka which has some features of resemblance to the tale of Alphonse. The story concerns the fate of Bjorn whose father, old King Hring, marries the woman named White. Tired of her husband, White makes advances to Bjorn, who rejects her. In anger, she strikes him with a pair of wolf-skin gloves and lays an enchantment upon him:

> **Nu listur hun til han3 med vlfhanska, ok seigir skylldi verda ad einum hydbyrne ölmum og grimmum, og nijta þier þö ongua faedslu vtann fie fodur þijn3. Pad skalltu drepa til matar þier meyra enn daemi si eu til, og alldrei skalltu vr þessum alogum fara, og skal þier þesse minning verre eun einginn.**
>
> **42**

Bjorn disappears; and a huge, grey bear slaughters the King's sheep. Bera, the Carl's daughter, sees the bear, and recognises the eyes of Bjorn. (In werwolf stories this is supposed to be the one aspect of appearance not to change). The beast retreats and she follows it to a cave. She watches while the bear resumes its man-shape and sees that it is indeed Bjorn. He speaks to her of his enchantment. Meanwhile the King's men have gathered to slaughter the beast. The story goes on to tell how the old King surrounds and kills his own son:

> **Hann seigir henni fyrer marga hlute, og steypist sijdann biarnar hamurinn yfer hann, og geingur biorninn so vt og hun ep_tir honum. Og er hun litast vm, þá sier hun koma mikid lid framm fyrir fiall3 oxlina, og fara margir hundar og störer fyrir lidinn. Biorninn rennur nu frá hellernum og framm med fiallinu. Koma nu hundarner og kongs mennirnir j möte honum, og vard hann þeim torsocktur. Meiddi hann marga menn fyrir þeim ädur hann yrdi söttur, og alla hundana deiddi hann. Par kom ad þeir slöu hrijng**

> **vm hann, og suemadi hann þä jnnan vm hrijnginn, og sier j huort efni komid er, ad hann faer eij vndann komist. Snyr hann þangad sem kongur stendur, og þrijfur þann mann sem naestur stöd honum, og reyf hann knikann j sundur. På var biorninn so mödur ad hann kastadi sier flotum nidur. Hlaupa þeir þaa skiott ad og drepa hann.**
> 43

No such tragic fate befalls Alphonse or his father, but the romance shares with the Norse story the theme of the vengeful step-mother and her power to transform others into animals. Another example, from the Volsunga Saga, tells of the ability of two young men to change themselves into wolves. This is one of several other examples in Norse literature,[44] and not only contributes to Skeat's argument that shape-changing stories were well-known to the Northmen, but supports the suggestion of Baring-Gould that the werwolf myth sprang from conditions of outlawry rather than from magic practice or ritual.

The story of Sigmund and Sinfjotli tells how the latter, to test the courage and hardiness of his friend, decides that they shall live as outlaws in the woods, slaying men for their livelihood. It is as Sinfjotli has approved Sigmund as a true branch of the Volsung stock that they encounter by chance the magic of the werwolves:

> **Nu er þat eitthvert sinn, at þeir fara enn a skoginn at afla ser fjar, en þeir finna eitt hus ok tva menn sofandi i husinu meþ digrum gullhringum; þeir hafa orþit fyrir uskoþum, þviat ulfahamir hengu yfir þeim; it tiunda hvert dogr mattu þeir koma3 or homunum; þeir varu konungssynir. Peir Sigmundr foru i hamina ok mattu eigi or koma3, ok fylgþi su nattura, sem aþr var, letu ok vargsroddu; þeir skilþu baþir roddina. Nu leggja3 þeir ok a merkr, ok ferr sina leiþ hvarr þeira; . . .**
> 45

Baring-Gould points out that in Norway and Iceland certain men were said to be "eigi einhamir", or not of one skin; and that this may have had its roots in paganism.[46] Certainly the impersonation of animals and the

imitation of their behaviour is associated in some societies with sympathetic magic and totemism. But the writer goes on to examine the frequency with which the roving warriors in Norse literature dress themselves in the skins of ferocious beasts to give themselves courage and a fearful aspect. Amongst these are Njala, in goatskins; and Bjorn, son of Ulfhenðin (wolf-skin coat), son of Ulfhamr (wolf-shaped), son of Ulf (wolf), son of Ulfhamr, - these being mentioned in Holmverja Saga. The berserkir in Harold Harfagr all dress in wolf-skins, and a similar company of warriors in Vatnsdaela Saga, called ulfheðnir, wore wolf-skins over their mail-coats. The very word berserkr, Baring-Gould thinks, describes a man who puts on a bear-sark, or armour-covering bearskin tunic. It is quite possible to believe that stories of man-beasts, endowed with great ferocity and predisposed to the slaying of men, grew out of the dread that these men inspired. The tradition that the eyes might always be recognised fits in with Baring-Gould's theory that the accounts of werwolves are significant of disguise originally, rather than of shape-shifting.[47]

Werwolves were associated yet more specifically with outlawry and evil. Ancient Norman laws condemned criminals as outlaws with the words: "Wargus esto". The Lex Ripuaria, (tit. 87), echoes this: "Wargus sit hoc est expulsus"; and in the Leges Canuti, the outlaw is termed "verevulf". Salic Law, (tit. 57), outlaws those who despoil graves thus: "Si quis corpus jam sepultum effoderit, aut expoliaverit, wargus sit." And Palgrave[48] is quoted as saying that the Anglo-Saxon outlaw was said to have had the head of a wolf: the legal form of the sentence was: "He shall be driven away as a wolf, and chased so far as men chase wolves farthest." The fact that wolves had been extirpated from England under the Saxon kings, and that English folk-lore is barren of werwolf stories, points again to the Norse

origins of this myth, - an embodiment, perhaps, of the memory of men cast out of society or voluntarily exiled, who concealed their identity and lived as predators in much the same fashion as the Volsung heroes.

William of Palerne, then, is not only a translation of the Anglo-Norman poem (the poet tells us this at the beginning and the end of the romance), but probably echoes an earlier Norse tale in its use of the werwolf myth. The origin of the myth itself may lie in sympathetic magic, but there is strong evidence to suggest that the appearance and social behaviour of early outlaws and roving warriors at least contributed to the stories of apparently magical creatures.

The concern with the fate of Alphonse in this romance runs parallel with the adventures of the lovers, William and Melior. The two themes join where Alphonse, who has already lived the life of a werwolf for many years, discovers the two lovers escaping Melior's detested suitor in the guise of white bears. This is clearly not shape-changing magic being used to aid the lovers; the appropriation of the skins and the dressing of the bears by the maid Alisaundrine is plainly, even humorously, described (ll.1704 ff.). A similar disguise is taken when the white bears become recognisable; at the Straits of Messina, the lovers disguise themselves anew as hart and hind (ll.2589 ff.). We have, therefore, two themes of equal importance in the romance; one involves Alphonse who has unwillingly come under the werwolf enchantment; the other deals with the lovers who are under some compulsion to escape their circumstances urgently but, for no reason which can be discovered in the text, choose to disguise themselves as animals.[49] There is no other such disguise in the English metrical romances; therefore it might be assumed that the disguise of William and Melior is not arbitrarily included in the narrative, but

stands in a definite relationship to the magical transformation of Alphonse.

It has already been argued, in the context of Sir Gawain and Kyng Alisaunder, that the English romancers adapted magical games and practices as material to their own purposes. William of Palerne, it seems possible, is another instance of this. The strongest evidence for the argument is the marked difference in the manner in which the author treats the enchantment of Alphonse on the one hand and the disguise of the lovers on the other. The fate of the prince is serious, almost tragic, as it is described by the poet; the disguised escape of the lovers is attended by humorous description, dialogue and incident, and by comic detail which clearly offers the opportunity for laughter. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the disguise in the one theme is a burlesque upon the myth-magic in the other, and equally difficult not to make the further assumption that the opportunity to make fun, even obliquely, of shape-changing magic and tales of werwolves could only have arisen in a cultural atmosphere in which these phenomena were regarded as doubtful or archaic. If this is so, the recent argument that, in John Speir's words, "the best episodes (in Arthurian and associated romances) poetically are often those in which the original myth elements are most alive" does not in every case hold true.[50] In the case of the romance discussed here, the senescence or death of the myth seems, paradoxically, to have engendered a fresh poetry.

Evidence suggests that a margin between the knowledge of myths and belief in them great enough to allow this kind of burlesque did exist at the time that Guillaume de Palerne, the Anglo-Norman

antecedent, was written. James Blessing[51] points out that the bear and deer disguises had already received comic treatment before the English translator took up the romance: the episode in which the Greek soldier sees the bears walking upright through the garden, for example, is similar in the English version (ll.2154 ff.) to the original in Anglo-Norman (ll.3792 ff.).[52] He notes that what the English author contributes is an intensification of the comedy by the addition of "realistic, humorous and farcical detail"[53] to the narrative, and by the invention of original farce episodes for inclusion such as the incident with the ship's boy.[54] The opportunity for comedy was clearly embraced by the Englishman; the sceptical view of shape-changing and werwolves must also have been shared by him.

Some origins of the disguise theme may be found in customs and practices of magical and religious origin; but these early rituals were not consciously preserved by the romancers, nor were they included in romance narratives to add their original significance to the poetic content of the work. The game of pluck-buffet and the figure of the Green Man are amalgamated, for literary purposes only, by a poet who was unconcerned with their early, separated, existence; the sinister associations with shape-shifting are forgotten or deliberately ignored by the Alexander poets; and the dread of the werwolves has become a gentle joke for the poets who wrote about William of Palerne. At its most sympathetic, romance offers a vague belief in, and understanding of these magical forms of disguise to add an undefined (sometimes deliberately so) sense of the marvellous. At the other end of the scale is an assumption of disbelief which offers the opportunity for broad adaption,

even comic distortion. Although there is some evidence that an understanding of magic and ritual was still alive in the romances deriving material from the early legends of Merlin and Morgan la Fay, it appears that by the time the Anglo-Norman version of William was written, in the twelfth century, the belief in such magic was already dead.

b). The Transition of Ritual Disguise to Myth and Folk Literature.

The direct influence of the beliefs and practices of early societies on the romances, with special reference to the disguise theme, has been indicated in examples of customs, rites and games which have survived in folk memory, and have been taken as they stand or adapted to the contemporary style of the romancer and included in the poetic narrative. A second area of influence can be seen in the long and complex transition of ritual through primitive drama to early myths and folk-tales; in this area, romancers have drawn not the isolated ritual act or the remembered manner of performing it, but the tale of the ritual, the verbal correlative of the acted rite. The indirect route of early magic to disguise themes in romance begins with the importance of disguise or symbolic appearance in primitive religion. When the acts of worship became formalised and elaborate, the dress or ornament of the celebrant(s) and of the object worshipped, changing seasonally or according to the function of the ceremony, became vital; the process developed into a form of costumed drama. As a liturgy emerged from the ritual, priest and god became dramatic protagonists who performed specific deeds and actions in prescribed dress. The transition of priest/god to hero can be

seen, in Celtic myth, in the figure of the Irish hero Cuchulainn, and in the Mabinogion in the hero Lleu or Llugh. Other examples from the Mabinogion can be found where disguise appears to be used according to formulaic accounts of the lives of hero/gods.

Huizinga,[1] in speaking of the necessity of conveying tension in creative writing, touches upon certain aspects of the hero, including the theme of disguise. He writes:

> **Another set of tension-producing themes hinges upon the hidden identity of the hero. He is incognito either because he is deliberately concealing his identity, or because he does not know it himself, or because he can change his shape at will. In other words, he is wearing a mask, he appears in disguise, he carries a secret. Once more we are close to the old and sacred game of the hidden being who will only reveal himself to the initiated.**

The writer is only one of many modern commentators on history and on literature to whom the links between primitive religion and some of the oldest themes in myth and romance are obvious. There are many other writers who can demonstrate, as a result of their own anthropological and sociological researches, or with their own work on literature supported by historical evidence available to them, how these links were developed. Richard Axton,[2] speaking on the widely-held theory that folk-plays are magical rituals, comments:

> **Among the performances noted by Jane Harrison (Themis, 2nd ed., London 1963), in Thrace and Northern Greece early this century, one was performed by perambulatory masqueraders in masks, goatskin caps and bells . . . This bizarre performance can only make sense to the sophisticated interpreter as "sympathetic magic" of a primitive kind, in which the life of the year and the fertility of the grain are assured through the mimetic human action, "as if god's death were but play".**

In relating folk-drama to the drama of the late Middle Ages, he adds:

> **In this, anthropologically speaking, most primitive of folk-plays (the "plough-play"), the participants are invited to take part in slaying the victim in order that they can affirm the victory of life over death in the community of the new plough-ox. The world of the "folk" glimpsed here seems far from that of the fifteenth-century mystery plays. Yet, as I shall argue later, the patterning of the action and the manner of playing in certain plays can be seen to betray the shaping power of a subliterary tradition of folk-drama.**

R.de Langhe,[3] recording his research on the Ras Shamra Tablets which contain Ugaritic liturgical verse used in ritual, makes conclusions as to how literature developed from religious acts:

> **The purely ritual act is projected directly on to the plane of the ideal; and this is how myths are born. The myth translates the real in terms of the ideal, the temporal and the concrete in terms of duration and transcendence. Finally, the ritual, by the transposition brought about by the myth, is itself transformed into drama. We can go even further: the ritual "form" survives not only in the complete drama but also in the structure of hymns and certain literary compositions.**

Most commentators on myth seem to share to assumption that its genesis began with ritual. Remarks such as the following are commonly found, especially in the work of the years after the publication of Sir James Frazer's The Golden Bough (1890):

> **. . . the legend has pretty certainly grown out of the rite, as usually happens; . . .**
>
> **4**

> **Behind the myth (of the Minotaur), as is so often the case, we may detect a ritual performance,**
>
> **5**

> **And not only is the Myth the explanation of the rite; it is at the same time, in part at least, the explanation of the god.**
>
> **6**

> **If we turn to the living myth, that is the myth that is believed in, we find it has no existence apart from the ritual.**
>
> **7**

It can be argued from the myths surrounding heroes like the Irish Cuchulainn and the Welsh Lleu that their "lives" were not those of real men, heroes or not, but were rather a formula for the acts of the participants, worshippers or worshipped, of a ritual. It can also be argued that some romance heroes, particularly those of the Arthurian cycle, are the heroes of Celtic myth adapted to a different genre.[8] But it has to be asked whether the romancers, or even the earlier bardic transmittors of the myths, were so aware of the complex mass of information on primitive religion (much of it only available since large-scale comparisons were made between modern primitive societies and the surviving literature of earlier ages in our own culture) that they consciously imbued their poetry with profound, and sometimes hidden, meanings. Further, a close look has to be taken at the apparent justification for proving "by printed texts the parallels existing between each and every feature of the Grail story and the recorded symbolism of the Mystery cults",[9] or even for finding "an aura of sacredness" in romance "perhaps flowing without a break from a sacred ritual origin", and seeking within the "courtly ladies, queens or kings' daughters" the goddesses of "spring, flower, earth or moon . . . . or fountain, tree, lake or sea spirits."[10] It is reasonable to bear in mind, while looking at the connections, which certainly appear to exist, between the Celtic gods and romance heroes, and at the evidence for some origins of disguise in ritual dress, that the intricacies of argument and the vast compass of the research of scholars involved in relating all these things would have been outside the concern and the resources of the medieval romancers. That they are more likely to have been ignorant of, or

simply not preoccupied with, the significance of these relationships has already been suggested in this chapter.

From the earliest times, evidence of the importance of dress and of disguise in ritual has been offered in literature and painting. Frazer notes the occasions on which the Pharaohs and their attendants perform ceremonies in masks or head-pieces resembling the features of gods, during the ritual union of a princess with her husband, for example, or at the birth of the heir. Concluding that the ceremonies of the Pharaohs, including those connected with their nativity, were copied from the life on to temple walls, he notes:

> **. . . that the carved and painted scenes represent a real drama which was acted by masked men and women whenever the Queen of Egypt was brought to bed . . . In general we are bound to hold that all the pictures traced on the walls of the temples, in which the person of the King is concerned, correspond to a real action in which disguised personages played the part of gods.**
>
> 11

Somerset[12] notes the frequency in Hebrew literature with which subjects are covered in the skins of goats, (among them Jacob, who was disguised, and Joseph, whose garment was covered in the blood of goats), and connects this with a ritual in which a pretence was made of the sacrifice of a child, the child then being wrapped in the skin of a slaughtered goat and soaked in its blood. He finds a special importance attaching to dress in descriptions of ceremonies in more recent literature, notably that of the Norsemen.[13] The Thorbjorg prophetess, in Eiriks saga Rauða, arrives at Thorkells house in order to see into his future arrayed thus:

> **En er hon kom um kveldit, ok sa maðr er moti henni var sendr, þa var hon sva buin at hon hafði**

> yfir ser tuglamottul blan ok var settr steinum alt i skaut ofan; hon hafði a halsi ser glertolur, ok lambskinnskofra svartan a hofði ok við innan kattskinn hvitt, ok hon hafði staf i hendi ok var a knappr: hann var buinn með mersingu ok settr steinum ofan um knappinn; hon hafði um sik hnjoskulinda, ok var þar a skjóðupungr mikill, ok varðveitti hon þar i taufr sin, þau er hon þurfti til frøðleiks at hafa; hon hafði a fotum kalfskinnssko loðna, ok i þvengi langa, ok a tinknappar miklir a endunum, hon hafði a hondum ser kattskinnsglofa, ok varu hvitir innan ok loðhir.
>
> 14

Similar is the description of Skarphedinn, in Njals Saga, with his blue kirtle and grey leggings, silver belt and silver head-band, and Geirmund in Laxdaela Saga.[15] The appearance of Odin is also carefully and repeatedly described in Volsunga Saga. The disguised figure in ritual is often, as Huizinga's comment suggests, the chief participant or the hero of the act.

Theories have also been offered on the relationship between myth hero and early god, notably those of Loomis, Hull and Nutt.[16] All suggest in their studies that many of the Celtic heroes seem to share an identity. Long and involved work supports the general thesis that there is not a single incident or feature in the accounts of Cuchulainn, for example, or any other Irish hero, which may not be found elsewhere. The multiplicity of relationships between heroes, also, seems to suggest that these more-than-human men could be whatever they were required to be: Cuchulainn can be the son, or the reincarnation of Llugh, Llugh is recognised as identical with the Welsh Lleu, also with the Gaulish Lug; Gawain is probably a variant of Cuchulainn, since both names mean "smith"; parallels can also be found between the adventures of Gawain and the story of Cuchulainn and the Terrible, in which an unknown stranger, challenging Cuchulainn to behead him and then submit to beheading

himself, departs carrying his own head and returns at an appointed time to offer a light blow rather than a death-stroke. The inexhaustible intricacies and interrelationships of the myths and their heroes have been summed up by Somerset, in his remarks on Cuchulainn, thus.[17] He suggests that, added to the fact that there is no one incident in the hero's story which is not shared by other mythical characters, no historical evidence can be found for the existence of such a man, not even so much as is claimed for the existence of Arthur: none of his activities suggest those of a real human being: descriptions of his appearance, also, are not those of a human being: rites closely resembling the adventures of Cuchulainn, including the beheading game, are known to have taken place in France, Germany and Sweden, probably also in Ireland; such rites have as their central figures not people, but the images of gods. The myths, then, are the sublimated functions of the ritual; the heroes of the myths are the protagonists of ritual, both human and divine.

In the transition of ritual to literature W.J. Gruffyd, dealing with the development of Lleu from Celtic god to hero in the Mabinogi, sets down four stages: in the first a mythology is developed around a god for whose worship there is substantial evidence; in the second the mythology becomes "history"; mythological history then enters folk-lore; lastly, folk-lore is utilised to form literary tales.[18] Thus in the Fourth Branch of the Mabinogi, we have Lleu, pierced in the head by the spear of his wife's new lover, escaping in the form of an eagle, and restored to his former life and likeness by his father Gwynion,[19] - clearly, if viewed in the light of Somerset's and Gruffyd's arguments, a literary correlative of rites concerning kingship, and death, and re-birth.

Many other examples of the themes of disguise or unknown identity can be found throughout the Mabinogion; by far the most frequent are those involving the hero or the hero's son. In Pwyll Prince of Dyfed,[20] for instance, there is the episode in which Pwyll offends Arawn, King of the Otherworld, whilst hunting, and as atonement is commanded to go to the Otherworld disguised as Arawn, to sleep with his wife and to defeat an enemy with only one blow. Pwyll also disguises himself as a poor man, in coarse, shabby garments, with big rag boots on his feet, in order to trick a rival suitor for the hand of his love Rhiannon. When his son is born, the child is stolen but is reared by kindly foster-parents who do not know his identity, but soon discover that they have come upon an infant of prodigious beauty and strength. In the story of Manawydon Son of Llyr,[21] the hero, of noble birth, resolves to earn his living as a poor shoe-maker, and excels all others so conspicuously that he becomes the victim of jealous plots. There are many of these examples, and it is not difficult to lay upon them the ready-made templates with which modern scholarship has supplied us and subsequently to discern the formulae of ritual. It is also easy to recognise the themes of the Beheading Game, the Rival Suitors, the Beautiful Unknown and the Noble Beggarman and to relate them to many of the romances.[22] Again it must be asked whether these ancient themes from myth, and from ritual beyond that, are found in the romances because the poets were purposely challenging the unconscious collective memory of their audience, or whether they are there because they are present so abundantly and so satisfying in the literary sources available at the time. The complexity of the process of development from ritual to myth would seem to preclude the first possibility and to favour the second.

Most modern scholarship, then, would agree that early folk-drama emerged from some forms of ritual, as did formulaic verbal expressions of the acts within ritual: in myth, the hero, it seems likely, is the priest or god performing those acts. Story formulae found in myths do re-appear recognisably as themes in the romances; and some disguise themes may have originated in the ceremonial dressing or adorning of the chief participants in ritual. But there is no reasonable evidence to suggest that the medieval romancers, although they often treated the magical and the marvellous, took up any myth theme with an understanding of its primitive significance, and placed it within a narrative which would already accommodate that significance, or was developed so as to enhance it.

Conclusion

Some instances of disguise in romance can be linked with single elements of early magic or religion which have remained largely unchanged, for example, the dress of the Green Man, or the game of pluck-buffet. Other, larger, themes of disguise can be presumed to have developed within the transition of ritual, through myth, to romance. Evidence suggests that the function of surviving rites, customs and magical games was not always understood, and that these things were readily adapted to contemporary literary purposes. That they were sometimes burlesqued suggests that their hold upon the religious and superstitious consciousness of men had weakened; and their deliberate employment in creating a sense of mystery presumes a lack of knowledge about them. The breadth and the comparative youth of studies which suggest links between romance, myth and ritual, also argue that romancers are unlikely to have had an understanding of the symbolism of the myths from which they borrowed, beyond an

instinctive and aesthetic appreciation of a successfully repeated and universally relevant story. That elements of myth and ritual do survive in romance, and are even found amongst the themes of disguise, is undeniable. It cannot be assumed, however, that they were included in narratives consciously as elements of myth and ritual, or that we can impose on the romances a reading too heavily prejudiced by a modern knowledge of past ages.

CHAPTER 5

ASPECTS OF CONTEMPORARY LIFE: ROMANCE AND REALITY

Amongst instances of disguise in romance are those which are just as likely to reflect the day-to-day experience of life in medieval society as the reading and literary knowledge of the poets and romancers. Social conditions and contemporary circumstances, in which warfare and (if not always love) marriage were crucial elements, often moulded the lives of men and women to resemble those of individuals in romance. Disguise in battle and at the joust was by no means uncommon at the time that the English romances were being written: early pieces of head-armour designed for warfare, and nearly all tournament helms, were of such weight and covering that facial features rarely confirmed identity; the bearer of a coat of arms was not always its owner, as the frequency with which pleas of arms were brought suggests. The recognition of noble breeding in a man or woman, as indicated by education and accomplishments, was as frequent in life as in literature: the art of venery, as demonstrated by Tristan, for example, can be shown to be the exclusive reserve of the nobility and their professional masters of game; a parallel art for the noble woman, taught in seminaries for young princesses and appearing in the romance of Emaré, is that of needlework and embroidery. Legislation and personal records indicate that journeys were very often undertaken in some kind of disguise, legal or not, and that in order to enjoy safety and freedom of movement, it was best to claim the privileges of the pilgrim, the merchant, the minstrel and the leper, - all used in disguise episodes in romance: the minstrel, in particular, could not only be easily imitated, but was afforded special rights of access to hall and court. Some so-called "cliché"

devices in romance disguise occur less frequently than is sometimes thought, and no more frequently than may be found in the evidence of contemporary life and conduct.

a) Medieval Chivalry and Romance.

Chivalry drew its inspiration not only from the heroes of romance, but from the heroes of real wars and tournaments, real lives and endeavours. Whether it is possible that men performed colourful and heroic deeds in imitation of the most attractive features of romance, or whether it is more likely that the cultural climate of the times, and the wealth and power of certain ranks of men, allowed and even prompted such deeds, the fact remains that early on chivalry was a living institution which offered human and practical example to the attentive writer.

The life of William Marshal in the twelfth century is an instance of this. For fifteen years he devoted himself to the most aristocratic cult of his day, and his knightly prowess and virtues earned him the most distinguished rewards and honours. His life of knight-errantry between 1169 and 1183 included such episodes as a pilgrimage to Compostella; two years of tournament in northern France, during which time he captured one hundred and three knights in ten months; an attempt to clear his name in judicial combat of the charge that he was the lover of his master's wife (he was tutor-in-chivalry to the son of Henry II); a display of skills in tournament at Clermont so outstanding as to occasion the bids of the counts of Flanders and Burgundy for his service, an offer of £500 per annum, a town and the daughter of the Advocate; and finally, an adventure with an

eloping couple, the lover a monk attempting to support them both by means of usury. Upon the death of Prince Henry in 1183, William undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem which lasted two years.[1] The biography of the Marshal is not artificial eulogy casting the man in the rôle of romance hero; much of the work is concerned with political events and the life of one who was, above all, an able statesman; contemporary circumstances and opportunity fashioned the life of the knight more than the style of his biographer.[2]

The same is true of two other early biographies, the poem on the Black Prince written by Chandos Herald (who carefully proclaims his historical intent) in about 1383,[3] and the Livre des Faicts on the life of Boucicaut written, c. 1408, before his death.[4] Chandos Herald emphasises Edward's courtesy towards John the Good after Poitiers. This was manifested in his refusal to sit at the table with so great a man; he preferred to carve and serve, as a mark of humility. Of his astonishing feats of arms the writer remarks merely that they might compare with Oliver and the Dane, or with Guy who was so courteous.[5] Boucicaut, in a career filled with travels in the East and in Prussia, an appointment as Marshal at the age of twenty-five, the governorship of Genoa, his service and capture at Agincourt, and his sojourn in prison until his death in 1421, managed also to excel in the famous jousts at St. Inglevert in 1390; and he found in 1399 his order, "The White Lady and the Green Shield". The object of this order was to protect women against oppressive lords; thirty other knights took up the badge of the order. In the encomium upon the Marshal's personal qualities, wisdom and religious devotion figure as largely as his knightly achievements.

Amongst other records of the lives of men and women in the Middle Ages are smaller episodes oddly redolent of the use of disguise in romance, but almost certainly not borrowed from them. Augustine Vincent, for example, at pains to correct the errors of historians, relates the story of Ela, the wife of William Longspée, and the knight William Talbot, who was sent to Normandy to find her.[6]

> **Eodem tempore in Anglia fuit quidam Miles nomine Guillelmus Talbot, qui induit se habitum peregrini, in Normanniam transfretavit, & moratus per duos annos, huc atque illuc vagans, ad explorandam dominam Elam Sarum. Et illa inventa exuit habitum peregrini, & induit se quasi Cytharisatur & Curiam ubi morabatur intravit. Et ut erat homo iocosus gestis antiquorum valde peritus, ibidem grantater fuit acceptus quasi familiaris.**

When he found a fit time, William returned to England and presented the lady to Richard the king, who married her to his brother William. Vincent dates this episode in 1196.

There is also the story of the misfortunes of the minnesinger, Walter von der Vogelweide, who was suddenly deprived of his patron, Duke Frederick of Austria, killed in a tournament accident. In 1198 he left Vienna and was forced to live a life of wandering and beggary until 1203 when his talents were recognised and he was taken into the service of Wolfger of Passau, and earned his first fee, a fur-lined coat.[7]

Somewhat more eccentric, but almost certainly true, is the journey of Ulrich von Lichtenstein through Austria, Italy and Bohemia in 1227.[8] Ostensibly this was a jousting tour; but in his own narrative of the journey, Ulrich not only itemizes his successes on the field (his record, a total of three hundred and seven spears broken in the space of one month), but explains that he undertook

the danger in honour of his lady; that this might be apparent to all who witnessed his performance, he dressed himself as "frau Venus".[9] This disguise or dress is somewhat unusual for a man of that time;[10] but Ulrich insists that he stayed, incognito, in Venice whilst waiting for the costume to be made during the preceding winter, and that in his challenge to the knights of Italy and Austria he made special mention of his appearance.

The code of chivalry, then, was not confined to the pages of romance, but permeated the lives of the aristocratic classes, their poets and artists; that many members of the nobility were poets and artists is evident and partly explains the strength of chivalric influence. Life, of course, can be influenced by such a powerful culture, its outpouring of songs and romances, and its accounts of the deeds of men. But recorded achievements of men who lived before most of the English romances were written, at least, show that in some cases reality equalled, and even outstripped, romance, and that the inspiration of such lives was not necessarily the literature, but the society and culture which the literature describes.

b) Arms and Armour

The deliberate concealment of identity by means of different-coloured armour or the wearing of all-enclosing head-pieces occurs in eight of the English metrical romances (including the disguise of Sir Bertilak in Sir Gawain).[1] Of these the majority are in the context of an individual joust or a tournament. Ipomadon, Le Morte Arthur, Richard and Sir Gowther mention the use of two or three colours, either black and red, or black, red and white. Richard

(272 ff., 333 ff., 387 ff.) also describes the King in heraldic arms; black armour bearing a raven, red armour with a red hound, and white armour with a red cross and a white dove. Ipomadon and Le Morte Arthur refer to the disguising of the face. Sir Launcelot comes to court unrecognised to challenge the Queen's accusers:

Comes Sir Launcelot du Lake,
Ridand right into the hall.
His steed and armour all was blake,
His visor over his eyen fall;

(LMA. 1554 ff.)

Ipomadon, the Queen's "dru", goes to the wood to arm himself and arrives quietly at the tournament:

Couyrd-heddyd might men ryde,
No man myght se hym on no syde,
Yf it were lyghte of day.

(Ip.3071 ff.)

In the story of two brothers who fight unknown to each other, in the same romance, a bascinet is worn to cover the face. As Cavdor is slain and falls,

His basnette flew off þare;
When Dreas sawe his visage bare,
Wonder-woo he was;

(Ip.4460 ff.)

Clearly, the surest way to hide one's identity in battle or tournament was to wear a head-piece which left as little visible as possible. The heaume or 'great helm' was just such a protection. Enyas in Chevelere Assigne describes it in a child's fashion:

And what hevy kyrtell is þis with holes so thykke:
And þis holowe on my hede i may no3t here?

(C. A. 295 f.)

The arming of Sir Gawain describes the helm minutely:

> **Þenne hentes he þe helme, and hastily hit kysses,**
> **Þat wat3 stapled stifly, and stoffed wythinne.**
> **Hit wat3 hy3e on his hede, hasped bihynde,**
> **Wyth a ly3tly vryson ouer þe auentayle,**
> **Enbrawden and bounden wyth þe best gemme3**
> **On brode sylkyn borde, and brydde3 on seme3**
> **As papiayes paynted pernyng bitwene,**
> **Tortors and trulofe3 entayled so þyk**
> **As mony burde þeraboute had ben seuen wynter in toune.**
> **Þe cercle wat3 more o prys**
> **Þat vmbeclypped hys croun,**
> **Of diamaunte3 a deuys**
> **Þat boþe were bry3t and broun.**
>
> **(S.G. 605 ff.)**

It is this kind of head-armour which was evolved in England in about 1210 to 1215, following the "Phrygian-cap", the Conquest form of head-piece, which left the face unprotected. It survived in battle until a movable visor was attached to the bascinet at the end of the fourteenth century,[2] when it was relegated to the tilting-yard. References to helms and visors in romances, therefore, are to the informed a specific indicator in terms of date and purpose.[3]

The apparent deviousness with which so many knights took to the field with concealing helms firmly on is not so far from plain fact, either. Although it has always been assumed that the honourable contestant leaves the most important part of his armour off until the last moment,[4] romancers knew that this was highly unlikely, if not dangerous. The helm of Gawain "stapled" and "stoffed", "hy3e" and "hasped bihynde" was not put on quickly and was not adjusted without help. Such helms weighed from five to six pounds with lining and padding, and were designed to rest on the shoulders and the breast. They were fastened in position by screws and nuts or,

in finer examples, by stout lockings. A safety chain was often attached (such as that among the achievements of the Black Prince in Canterbury Cathedral) which engaged into a T-shaped slot in the breast-armour. Inside the helm were laces and thongs which secured it more firmly to the sides of the head. Froissart mentions a trick used by Reynaud de Roy, who fastened his helm so lightly upon his head that it gave way at every stroke which struck the face, and the shock upon the neck was not so great.[5] Of Thomas Harpingham and John de Barres, who did the same thing, he says: "As me thought the usage was thanne their helmes wer tied but with a lace, to the entente the spere should take no hold".[6] William Marshal received a blow which actually fixed the helm more firmly to the head; his friends discovered him, head over the blacksmith's anvil, having the armour beaten off.[7] He would have been cushioned from the worst of the bruising, though, by the coif-de-maille, itself drawn up over a quilted arming-coif. These were covered with leather and were reinforced about the temples with a roll, giving the familiar outline to the mailed heads seen in the sculptures in the Temple Church. The coif-de-maille alone left little more than the eyes, nose and mouth visible.

The knight in romance, then, arrived very properly in full armour and with his face largely hidden, if he meant to be ready. Contemporary illustrations bear this out (Plates nos. VIII and IX); and the MS. Ordinances of Chivalry of the Fifteenth Century, belonging to Lord Hastings, assume, without doubt, that the knight did not go to the joust before he had fitted on his head-piece:

> **And then his basinet pynid on two greet staplis before the breste with a dowbill bokill behynde up on the bak for to make the basinet sitte juste. And then his long swerde in his hande. And then his pensill in his hande peyntid of seynt George of oure Lady to blesse him with as he gooth towarde the felde . . .**
>
> **8**

It was by no means unusual, and had become a common practice by the fourteenth century, for knights to own coloured armour. Armour was frequently blackened and Froissart mentions an instance of this under the year 1359.[9] Curzon describes a fourteenth-century helmet at Parham Park which had been painted red (see Plate VII). There are three others in the same collection, of a slightly later date, one covered with red velvet, one japanned black and another gilded. He believes that painting armour was a frequent occurrence in England and Germany. Richer armour was sometimes covered with coloured velvet and silk.[10] Pencels, banners, shields and horse-bardings could also be made of the same material so that a knight could be arrayed, like Ipomadon (3061, 3626.), "all in white" or "all in rede".

Colour, of course, was the simplest means of assisting recognition: but for those in battle and at the joust there was an allegorical significance. The meaning of many colours had been standardised by rules laid down for their use in ecclesiastical vestments, the earliest being those for Old Sarum c.1210.[11] Red, for example, which in the ancient world had been associated with blood and therefore power, was, in terms of Christianity, significant of the blood of Christ, and therefore of Justice and Mercy. Black and white are found used with specific intent in the Pas d'Armes de la Bergière to symbolize noblesse and joy, respectively.

> **There you may see two jousting shields attached to a tree: one white, signifying joy, devoid of all other colour: and the other black, signifying nobless . . . For those who wish to know more, the white shield is for those who are happily in love; the other for those who are not.**
>
> 12

The romance knight who disguises himself in colours, therefore, may be concealing himself in his person, but proclaiming himself in spirit.

c) Heraldry and Cognizance

> **N'i a riche home ne baron**
> **Qui n'ait lez lui son gonfanon,**
> **Ou gonfanon ou altre enseigne,**
> **Ou sa maisnie se restreigne,**
> **Conoissances e entresainz,**
> **De plusors guises escuz painz.**
>
> 1

The adoption of the closed helm and the popularity of the tournament, which in the thirteenth century was open only to the armigerous of four generations standing, made the wearing of distinctive tokens of identity indispensable. As more families and their successive generations took up coats of arms so blazoning became more elaborate and confusing. It was all very well to be asked to recognise the arms of one's own family and friends; in 1250 Hela, the abbess of Lacock, saw a vision which foretold the death of her son, William Longspee, and instantly knew the knight being received into heaven by his arms.[2] But who is to distinguish between the hundreds of knights and bannerets recorded as present at, say, the battle of Falkirk or Caerlaverock? Some barons employed anyone with a memory of previous battles. Simon de Montfort had a useful barber, "quo homo expertus erat in cognicione armatorum",[3] but who clearly wasn't that reliable at the Battle of Evesham in

1265 when he nearly got his lord into a deal of trouble. Most great men used the abilities of their own private harpers or minstrels who, from the twelfth century, had been associated with the opening of the tournaments and the proclaiming of the names of contestants with suitable laudatory comments: this is very much the style of the Roll of Caerlaverock, an Anglo-Norman metrical roll of the English knights at the battle in 1300.[4] L'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal tells of heralds and minstrels fighting together in Normandy in 1173:

> **Hirauz des armes releveor,**
> **Menestral avanceor**
> **Qui les beau cops voient et dient,**
> **Apres lui s'arotent et crient:**
> **'Or ca! tuit al bon chevalier.'**
>
> **5**

In the Falkirk Roll of Arms c.1298, we find all the warlike barons accompanied by their harpers; John le Harpur with Norfolk, Nicholas le Harpur with Oxford, John le Harpur with William de Cantiloupe, John le Harpur with Lancaster and Richard le Harpur with Walter de Beauchamp, the Steward of the Royal Household. N.Denholm-Young argues that successful minstrels with a knowledge of heraldry could become Kings of Arms, and, on some rolls, are the same men as the Kings of Minstrels.[6]

Certainly romance and heraldry are closely linked from the time, approximately, that we first hear of the popularity of the tournament. The Song of Caerlaverock, with its octosyllabic couplets and its style, strongly redolent of the oral-delivery style of the romances, suggests this:

> **Ainz vous diray de companions,**
> **Toutes les armes e le nons,**

De banerez nomément,
Si vous volez oir coment.

7

There is also in existence a fragment of a thirteenth century painted roll, the Herald's Roll, in which heroes of romance are assigned coats of arms side by side with the knights of Edward I: Prester John, Roland, Sir Beves and Sir Gawain are included. Denholm-Young discusses this in the context of the Arthurian cult in the English court at the time.[8] The importance of romance influences in terms of feudal politics are examined later.

In several instances romance looks to the customs and observances of heraldry. Eglamour and Degrebelle, in Sir Eglamour, both assume a coat of arms which, although they are unknown, tell of what has befallen them, an unusual and elaborate version of the knight armed in colours of allegorical significance. Degrebelle prepares for the tournament in Egypt:

He beris in azure a grippe of golde,
So richely betyn in þe molde,
And in his clowes hyngand
A knave-child in a mantill wowndyn,
And with a golde girdill bowndyn,
Als he was broghte to londe. **(11.1000 ff.)**

Shortly after, Eglamour bears this blazon:

Fro Cristabelle was don in þe see,
Newe arme þan beris hee;
Herkyns, I will þam discrye:
On azure with a schippe of golde
A lady, also scho drowne scholde
(A child lyggand hir by,
Purtrayede of a nyghte alde)
In þe see so grym and balde,
And ever in poynte to dy;
Of sylver his maste, of golde his fane;
His sayle and his rapis ylkane
Purtrayede verrayly.

(11.1162 ff.)

In this romance there is reference to the duties of the heralds:

i) **Grete lordis þay gun crye:**
'What man es he þat es so hye,
Pat beris 3one gryffone bryghte?'
Harawdis of armes gun þan telle:
'He es þe prynce of Israelle;
Bese warre, for he es wyghte.'

(11.1084 ff.)

ii) **Haurauds of armes bygan to crye**
Grete lordis full rathely
Into a felde so brade.

(11.1186 ff.)

In reality the canon of heredity of coats was often disregarded. F.P. Barnard argues that many quarterings appeared as a result of the same knight using different blazons at different times.[9] There is also a recorded instance, in the Roll of Caerlaverock, (11.353-360), of a dispute between two knights bearing identical arms:

Le beau Brian le filz Aleyn,
De courtoisie e de honnour pleyn,
I vi o baniere barree,
De or e de goules bien paree;
Dont de chalenge estoit li poinz
Par entre li e Hue Poinz,
Li portoit tel ne plus ne miens,
Dont merveille avoit meinte e meins.

The seriousness with which this was regarded was reflected in the regularity with which pleas of arms were heard at the court of the Constable and Marshal of England from as early as 1272.[10] In Morte Arthure, the poet emphasises that an attempt to disguise his arms is a thing Arthur would never stoop to:

Withouten changing in chase these were the chef armes
Of Arthur the avenaunt, whiles he in erthe lenged.

(11.3650 f.)

He anticipates the cowardly stratagem of Mordred who, fearing his forthcoming encounter with the king, does just this:

To encounter the king he castes him soon,
But the churlish chicken had changed his armes;

He had soothly forsaken the sauturor engreled, (i)
And laght up three lions all of white silver,
Passand in purpure of perry full rich,
For the king scholde not know the cautelous wretch.
(11.4180 ff.)

(i) a saltire with wavy edges.

d) The Courtly Arts: Venery.

Mordred's action clearly denotes an ignoble nature; but in some romances disguise is used to conceal noble birth, yet reveal an innate distinction and gentle breeding. Sometimes, as in Lai le Freine, the disguised person in poor circumstances, owns something of great value. Marie de France's version emphasises the porter's reaction to this when he finds the infant girl:

Entur sun braz treve l' anel;
Le paile virent riche a bel.
Bien surent cil tut e scient
Que ele est nee de haute gent.[1]
(11.207 ff.)

But romance poets are more often at pains to point out that, whatever the circumstances and possessions, nobility is present in ways which cannot be concealed. There is room for humour in the episodes in Octavian (Northern) in which Florent's gentle blood insists that he buy falcons instead of oxen, and considers the looks of a horse more than the price, (11.649 ff.and 755 ff.). In Havelok, the son of a king, ostensibly a cook's boy, has the power to draw men's attention by his great strength and personal beauty:

Ful sone it was ful loude kid
Of Hauelok, hw he warþ þe ston
Ouer þe laddes euerilkon;
Hw he was fayr, hw he was long,
Hw he was with, hw he was strong;
(11.1060 ff.)

Similarly, in Emaré, the heroine's change of name does not hide her inbred courtesy: the poet mentions it twice, (ll.380 f. and 724 ff.); it draws men's love as Havelok draws men's loyalty and admiration. It is a quality which she passes on to her son:

> **The chylde hem serued so curteysly,**
> **Alle hym loued þat hym sy,**
> **And spake hym gret honowres.**
>
> **(ll.868 ff.)**

These romances depict in Florent, Havelok, and Emaré and her son inbred qualities of noble birth.

Clearly, a courtly education was also given to those of noble blood. We get some idea of what it comprised from the romances. Those of noble character, strength and beauty, therefore, often display noble skills also. Emaré did not only comport herself gracefully; she had learned certain arts:

> **She taw3te hem to sewe and marke**
> **Alle maner of sylky werke;**
> **Of her þey wer fulle fayne.**
>
> **(ll.377 ff.)**[2]

Similar lines are repeated at ll.730 ff.

The most refined, and perhaps the archetypal, use of a disguised hero betraying his aristocratic origins, is in Sir Tristrem. Earlier versions, Thomas and possibly Béroul, had shown Tristan's acquaintance with the courtly arts of harping and chess-playing, but the writer of the later version chooses to relate the hunting episode in his compressed narrative; this tells us precisely what Tristan knew about the art of venery. The writer's spare style does not account for the technical exactitude and economic phrasing with which the excoriation of the hart is described:

Tristem share þe brest,
Þe tong sat next þe pride;
Þe heminges swiþe on est
He schar and layd bi side;
Þe breche adoun he þrest,
He ritt and gan to ri3t;
Boldliche þer nest
Carf he of þat hide
Bidene;
Þe bestes he graiþed þat tide,
As mani seþþen has ben.
Þe spande was þe first brede,
Þe erber di3t he 3are,
To þe stifles he 3ede
And euen ato hem schare;
He ri3t al þe rede,
Þe wombe oway he bare,
Þe noubles he 3af to mede.
Pat sei3en þat þer ware
Al so.
Þe rigge he croised mare,
Þe chine he smot atvo.
Þe forster for his ri3tes
Þe left schulder 3af he,
Wiþ hert, liuer and li3tes
And blod tille his quirre;
Houndes on hyde he di3tes,
Alle he lete hem se;
Þe rauen he 3aue his 3iftes,
Sat on þe fourched tre,
On rowe;
"Hunters, whare þe 3e?
Þe tokening schul 3e blowe."

(11.473-506)

. . . . . .

Þe tokening when þai blewe,
Þer wondred mani aman;
Þe costom pai nou3t knewe,
For þi fro bord þai ran;
No wist þai nou3t hou newe
Þai hadde hunters þan.

(11.518-526)

Much of this, like the instructions on modern hunting in the mountains of Bavaria to-day, or in another courtly art, the teaching of horsemanship by modern cavalry horse-masters, has the ring of the technical manual. These were in existence at the time the romances were written, and such are the similarities, it seems likely that the versions of the Tristan legend have incorporated extracts, little changed, from one or more hunting treatises in

order to lend authenticity to the figure of nobility disguised.

Guyllame Twici, or William Twyti, recorded in 1322 as huntsman to Edward II, (Close Roll entry. 140, mem.32), wrote one of these treatises; in parts it is remarkably like the Tristan version of the noble art of brittling a deer:[3]

> **. . . le venour avera le quir, e cely qe escorche la teste avera la espaudle par reson, e les chiens serrunt rewardez del cool a de la bowaylles, et de la faie, et serra mange sur le quir. E pur ceo est il apelee quyrreye . . . Quant le Deym est pris vous devez corneer prise e vous devez rewardez les chiens de la paunche e de les boweaus.**

There is an earlier, metrical version of this art in a mid-thirteenth century French manuscript, the fifty-fourth of a collection of different French poems entirely on the hart. It begins:

> **The sport is so royal that there is neither king nor count nor even Gawain, if he were alive and loved it well, who would not be more honoured for that reason by all who understand it.**[4]

The breaking of the head, the shoulder and the "quarry" for the hounds is very similar to Twici's account. The French poet continues:

> **. . . and then you ought to blow the prise, that one ought not to forget, and when you shall be near the house, be quick to sound the menees; they who shall hear you shall be both gay and joyous at it.**
>
> **Moreover I wish to teach you what rights you ought to have of the hart. The skin is yours and the numbles and the shoulders. The varlets have the neck, that is their right; but you ought to know by nature that these rights were given to you to be courteously used and meted out; take care that it does not happen that any man can blame you for default of giving them.**

There were many such treatises ensuring that beasts were dispatched in courtly fashion, "As many seppen has ben." We know of The Maistre of Game, c.1410,[5] The Craft of Venery, a late version, dated c.1450, of a translation of Twici[6] and The Bok of St. Alban's, 1486, compiled

from Twici and The Maistre of Game.[7] Such strong traditions, repeatedly written down, proved not only an influence, but a source for the romancers.

A similar episode, although not in the context of disguise, occurs in Sir Gawain, ll.1319 ff.; detail and the sequence of the process, again, are very close to Twici's treatise, and the Gawain-poet notes that it was "þe best" who took part in the hunt (l.1325). Ipomadon briefly describes the hero's part in the hunt, while being watched from a pavilion by the Duke of Calabria's daughter. As he breaks the deer, she

> **. . . thoght in hyr herts than**
> **That he was come of gentill men.**
>
> **(11.410 f.)**

e) Travellers in the Middle Ages

Medieval custom extended great latitude to certain kinds of traveller. Travellers also, either for convenience or out of necessity, tended to adopt a uniformity of dress. Men wishing to move about freely and anonymously, as is often the case in the romances, did well to disguise themselves as pilgrims, merchants or pedlars, lepers and minstrels.

i) Pilgrims

Sir Craddock, in Morte Arthure, travelling disguised as a pilgrim in order to bring news safely to Arthur, unexpectedly meets with him, does not recognise him, but being received sympathetically, begins to complain:

> **Whiles this world is o war, a wathe I it hold;**
> **Here is an enmy with host, under yon vines;**

But if thou have condeth of the king selven,
Knaves will kill thee and keep at thou haves, . .
(11.3480 ff.)

Craddock's complaint, placed between Arthur's dream of Fortune and the civil war in Britain, does more to suggest the corrupting and disintegrating effects of conflict than to reflect the situation as it really was. Other romances and evidence from contemporary records argue that, even in times of war, the pilgrim could expect to travel unhindered, and that those with less pious intent took advantage of this special freedom.

From Saxon times onwards, kings made treaties to secure the safe-conduct of pilgrims through foreign territory. They are mentioned in a letter to King Offa from Charlemagne, who says: "Concerning the strangers who, for the love of God and the salvation of their souls, wish to repair to the thresholds of the blessed Apostles, let them travel in peace without any trouble."[1] In the year 1031 A.D. King Canute made a pilgrimage to Rome, and obtained from the Emperor Conrad exemption from tolls for himself and all other pilgrims. Special provision was still being made even into the thirteenth century; at the marriage of Edward I to Leonora, sister of Alonzo of Castile, in 1254, special protections for English pilgrims were stipulated, but they arrived on the Continent in such numbers as to prompt the French to find means of legal obstruction.

Guy and Herhaud, travelling in separate instances across foreign land dressed as pilgrims, (Guy of Warwick, 11.1719 ff. and 9815 ff.), were doing as men had done for generations, therefore; it had become simply a wise precaution either to join a group of such

travellers, or, for the time being, to become one. Some of the most distinguished men took such measures.

Returning home through Burgundy in 1203, Giraldus Cambrensis and his companions were seized by the Castellan of Châtillon-sur-Seine, as subjects of the King of England who was then at war with the King of France; Giraldus continues:

> **Fuit autem inter palmiferos presbyter unus revera Francus et non Normannus. Hic audacius accedens ad praepositum, et officioso propter sociorum liberationem utens mendacio, dixit et asseruit ipsos de Gisortii partibus esse, et palmiferos omnes, et Sepulchri Dominici peregrinos, praeter archidiaconum solum, quem de Roma venientem Papiae primo repererant. Quod quidem postremo dictum verum fuerat. Hoc tamen absque mendacio praemisso nihil eis ad liberationem valuisset. Quibus auditis et fidem adhibens dictis, cunctos praeter archidiacunum et suos jussit praepositus liberari.**[2]

In romance, movement into an enemy court or camp is facilitated by the wearing of pilgrim dress. Clement, in Octavian (Southern), does this in order to enter the Sultan's court (ll.1357 ff.). In the romance of Sir Beues, the hero changed his clothes for those of a palmer in order to gain access to Josian at the court of King Ivor of Mambraunt:

> **Beues of is palfrei ali3te**
> **And schrede þe palmer as a kni3te**
> **And 3af him is hors, þat he rod in,**
> **For is bordon and is sklauin.**
> **Þe palmer rod forþ ase a king,**
> **& Beues wente also a breþeling.**
>
> **(ll.2063 ff.)**

Froissart notes an occasion on which this same stratagem was useful in getting out of a besieged stronghold. B.J. Whiting quotes this extract in his article "Troilus and Pilgrims in Wartime".[3] The English, in the campaign of Guienne of 1345, were besieged by the French at Auberoche. They had already attempted, unsuccessfully,

to get a messenger out to Henry of Lancaster:

Erratum.

The quotation from B.J.Whiting's article should read thus:

> En ce prope jour ceste avenue vint dou varlet et de la lettre, passèrent parmi l'oost pelerins de Flandres, liquel retournoient de Saint Jaque en Galise. On ne lor fist nul mal, mais toute courtoisie pour l'amour dou pelerinage; et orent à boire et à mengier en la tente dou conte de Laille, car ce fu uns moult vaillans preudoms, et qui moult amoit saint Jaque. Chil pelerin oïrent parler dou varlet et de la lettre, et conment par un enghien il l'avoient renvoiiet en la ville: on ne se donnoit garde de euls. Qant il orent beu et mengié, il passèrent oultre et vinrent ce soir jesir à Pellagrue qui estoit englesce. On ne lor demandoit partout riens, pour tant que il estoient pelerin de Saint Jaqueme. La chapitainne de Pellagrue lor demanda des nouvelles, pour tant que il avoient passet parmi l'oost devant Auberoce. Chil pelerin, qui nul mal n'i pensoient, li recordèrent tout ce que il avoient veu et oï; et qant il li orent dit, il prist congiet à euls.

Þe king sei3e cum þe pilgrim.
Bi þe sclauayn he him pli3t.

(ll.9815 f.)

The hero of King Horn, wishing to travel disguised to the wedding of Rimenhild, also takes the clothes and effects of a palmer; in this romance they are very carefully described:

His sclauyn he dude dun legge,
And tok hit on his rigge,
He tok Horn his cloþes;
Þat nere him no3t loþe.
Horn tok burdon and scrippe
And wrong his lippe.
He makede him a ful chere,
And al bicolmede his swere.
He makede him vnbicomelich,
Hes he nas neuermore ilich,

(ll.1057 ff.)

The sclavin was the distinguishing mark of the palmer. Walter Map calls it a robe, "pallam villasam quam sclavinam nominant."[5]

The bourdon and scrip, "signa peregrinationis", were received at the hands of a priest; the bourdon being a stout staff, a little taller than the bearer, which was fitted at the end with a large iron spike; for this reason the staff is often called a "pike". The earliest reference to the pilgrim disguise, in La3amon's Brut, specifically mentioned the "pic".[6] The episode originates in Geoffrey of Monmouth (Historia Regum Britanniae, xii,7.), telling how Cadwallo and Salomon plotted the death of King Eadwin: they have Brian, their assassin, cross from Ireland in mean clothing. La3amon elaborates:

> **þa imette he enne pilegrim þic bar on honde.**
> **li3end-liche þe com from þas kingges hirede.**
> **Brien hine gon fraeine of his fare-cost,**
> **þe pillegrim him talde al þat he wolde.**
> **Wiþ him warfte Brien al his iweden.**
> **and aeiþer gon lide þiþer him to luste.**
> **Brien enne smiþ funde þe wel cuþe smidie.**
> **and saide þat he wes pelegrim ah pic nefden he nan mid him.**
> **(11.15342 ff.)**

Brian, having persuaded the smith to make him a pike, "swiþe ling swiþe muchel an swiþe strong", goes off in pursuit of the king, armed with a powerful weapon.

The pilgrimage was a means of making atonement for past sins, and many men and women in the Middle Ages took the opportunity to square up their spiritual debts in this way.[7] The hero in Guy of Warwick does this:

> **Y schal walk for mi sinne**
> **Barfot bi doun & dale.**
> **Þat ich haue wiþ mi bodi it schal be bou3t,**
> **To bote me of þat bale.**
> **(11.7242 ff.)**

Isumbras, in the romance of the same name, during his period of penance for the pride of his heart, does the same thing:

He hym purveyde scryppe and pyke,
And dyghte hym a palmere lyke,
Ageyn that he wolde wende.

(11.494 ff.)

The custom was so prevalent in the Middle Ages that by the reign of Richard II workmen who were tired of one master would take up the staff, under pretext of going on a pilgrimage, only to travel as far as another master who would please them better. It became necessary to implement statutes,[8] by which false pilgrims and false hermits could be restrained by imprisonment, unless they could produce letters of passage.[9]

ii) Merchants and Pedlars

The free movement of the merchant class was not only protected in the Middle Ages, but was positively encouraged. It enjoyed by law certain privileges, even in time of war, which were denied to other types of traveller. Edward III makes it clear that he expects economic benefits to accrue nationally as the result of increased mobility of the merchant class:

> **To replenish the said realm and lands with money and plate, gold and silver and merchandises of other lands, and to give courage to merchant strangers to come with their wares and merchandises into the realm and lands aforesaid, we have ordained and established that all merchant strangers which be not of our enmity, of what land or nation they may be, may safely and surely under our protection and safe-conduct, come and dwell in our said realm and lands, where they will, and from thence freely return.**[10]

Foreign merchants were to sell their goods to whom they pleased, and to be exempted from purveyance, paying only normal customs. In the event of war between England and their country, they would have forty days in which to leave the realm, or more if they were ill or

detained by weather. A statute of the twenty-fifth year of Edward's reign stipulated that the intentions of the King should be brought to the notice of the officers and inhabitants of all the English counties, cities and ports.[11]

Merchants, then, were often able to pass in and out of towns and countries, even when other travellers were restricted. The same episode is told in Firumbras, Sir Ferumbras and The Sowdone of Babylone (ll.1221, 4345 & 2861 resp.) of how Richard of Normandy, chosen to go to Charlemagne for help for Roland and his peers besieged in Floripas' tower at Mantrible, suggests that Charles and his force can get past a giant bridge-keeper at the town disguised as Saracen merchants. In the Firumbras version, the poet describes, through the mouth of Richard, the splendid presence of the "merchants":

> **we be3t marchauntes of aragoun to passe thy passage,**
> **with sykelatoun and sendal and purpur of prys,**
> **with ryche clothys off gold that ben of gret prys,**
> **To honour oure mahound and oure mamotrye**
> **And oure ryche feste that 3e haue don crye,**
> **To schewe and to selle to our ameraunt.**
>
> **(ll.1267 ff.)**

The wealth of merchants was well known. In the fourteenth century, Edward III had as frequent recourse to them as to the Lombardy money-lenders.

Pedlars, on the other hand, did not appear to warrant such respect, or even much notice. They seem to have entirely escaped legislation until the reign of Edward IV, and are not named in any Act of Parliament until that time. Jusserand thinks that they were included by implication in statutes against vagrants and rovers.[12] It was a good disguise for those with little capital, prepared to risk a possible apprehension or evacuation from the community. Havelok (although part of the manuscript is missing at this point) speaks

of selling "ware/In gode borwes up and doun" when it tells of the disguise of Havelok and Grim's sons as they travel to meet Ubbe. It is more likely that they have assumed the appearance and business of pedlars rather than merchants (ll.1625 ff.). Ubbe is shocked by a disguise so unseemly for a man of Havelok's rank:

> **"Deus!" hwat Ubbe, "qui ne were he knith?**
> **I woth þat he is swiþe with!**
> **Betere semede him to bere**
> **Helm on heued, sheld and spere,**
> **Þanne to beye and selle ware.**
> **Allas, þat he shal þerwith fare!**
> **Goddot! wile he trowe me,**
> **Chaffare shal he late be."**
>
> **(ll.1650 ff.)**

There is a social significance, too, in the merchant disguise of Tristan in the late version, Sir Tristrem. At the point where Tristan comes to Dublin to be cured of his mortal wound, the romancer has him say:

> **Marchaund ich haue ben ay,**
> **Mi nam is tramtris.**
> **Robbers, for soþe to say,**
> **Slou3 mine felawes, y wis,**
> **In þe se;**
> **Þai raft me fowe and griis,**
> **And þus wounded þai me.**
>
> **(ll.1215 ff.)**

The writer has either confused his source or misunderstood the courtly implications in the original version, where Tristan is found adrift in a boat, playing sweetly upon the harp and singing. Gottfried says: "When they set eyes on him and saw how wretched he looked and the condition he was in, it offended them that he could perform such marvels with his hands and lips."[13] Tristan tells his rescuers that he met a merchant in Spain and set course with him for Britain; they

were attacked, and the merchant killed by a band of pirates. This is where the Sir Tristrem writer has the original for the merchant-disguise. In Gottfried's version, Tristan, having impressed his rescuers with his skill, moves the scholarly priest of Isolde to pity, - a man who "had devoted his life and talents to the cultured pursuits of the court." The priest pleads with the Queen to attend to the wounds of such a worthy man. In Sir Tristrem, not only does the hero lack the courtly qualities which prompt the Queen's sympathy; he does not even claim to be a travelling merchant until after she has dressed his wounds. The wrong use of a disguise motif here has considerably weakened the narrative. The inappropriateness of the substitution of merchant for minstrel suggests that, even by 1330, the generally agreed date for the Auchinleck MS., the courtly connotations attaching to some disguises in the early French romances were beginning to lapse from the work of the English writers. Morality rather than manners became their preoccupation, and, as has been seen in the first chapter, manners, and especially their absence, lent the English romances a rich vein of comedy.[14]

iii) Lepers

Lepers in the Middle Ages were almost necessarily itinerant. It is likely that general custom preceded legislation, but as early as 1220 there are recorded instances of lepers being removed from the English cities by writ of De leproso amovendo. In this way, Richard, Alice and Mathilda were expelled from Gloucester in 1273, as was Thomas Tytel, "webstere," from Norwich in 1375. In 1276 the Assizes of London declared that no leper should make any stay in the city: Bristol, in its "Customs" or bye-laws, made a similar declaration

in 1344. The Scottish "Burrow-laws" of the twelfth century forbade men to be "so bauld as to harberie or ludge ane lipperman within the burgh."; and the Canons of the Church of Scotland, in 1242, agreed that lepers should be separated from society and retired to secluded situations.[15]

There were certain encouragements, however, for lepers to frequent towns and villages. Apart from the necessity for begging, some charitable provisions were made for lepers. King John conferred on the lepers of Shrewsbury the privilege of a handful of corn or flour from sacks exposed in the market. By comparison, the Earl of Chester's generosity is remarkable: he provided for salt, fish, grain, malt, fruit and vegetables from the market to be given to lepers as well as one cheese or salmon from each load, and one horse from the fair. Edward III allowed lepers fifteen days' stay in a city before they betook themselves "to places in the country". An act of the Perth Parliament gave lepers the right to enter the town between ten and two o'clock on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Travel and visits to the town were often provided for by the constitutions of individual leper hospitals; Saint Julian's, near St. Alban's, allowed the master to give permission for a leper brother to go to the town, to venture through the town to a place up to a mile from the hospital, or to go to the well, the mill, or the grange. It was no uncommon sight, therefore, to see lepers in towns and villages, even in courts; and a man wishing to pass unnoticed, like Tristan or Generydes, could have lost himself in a crowd of such people, provided he had the right dress.

The Statua Hospitalis de Sancto Juliano, 1146, revised by Abbot Michael in 1344, ordained that, since amongst all infirmities leprosy

is held in the most contempt, lepers ought to be, in their manners and dress, "more contemptible and humble than other men". The statutes provided that the brothers were to have:

> **. . . a tunic and upper tunic of russet, with a hood cut from the same, so that the sleeves of the tunic be closed as far as the hand, but not laced with knots or thread after the secular fashion. They are to wear the upper tunic closed down to the ankles, and a close cape of black cloth of the same length as the hood, as they have been accustomed of old.**
>
> **16**

Other hospitals had their own uniform; the Hospital of the Cross, Winchester, had similar rules for dress. But the dress of lepers was basically the same, being very much along monastic lines. For the purpose of disguise, its obvious advantage was its all-enclosing design, covering the head and body down to the wrists and ankles.

The clapper mentioned in Sir Tristrem and earlier versions of the legend, and in Generydes (l.4271), was a legal requirement. In 1570, the Brigend Hospital, Glasgow, mentions it in its statutes governing behaviour and dress:

> **It is statut and ordanit that the lipper of the hospital sall gang only on the calsie (street) syde near the gutter, and sall haif clapperis and ane claith upon their mouth and face, and sal stand afar of . . . .**
>
> **17**

The hero of Sir Tristrem, "coppe and claper he bare" (l.3172), carries with him the distinguishing insignia of a leper as he goes to the court of King Mark to see Ysonde. Thomas, in the earlier and longer version, describes how he makes a clapper by putting a box-wood ball in a mazer-cup which the Queen had given him in the first year of their love.[18] He also describes, although Sir Tristrem does not, how

Tristan uses a herb which puffs up his face into a leprous swelling.[19] This is almost certainly the origin of a similar episode in Generydes; although it is the master of the ship who explains the trick to the hero (ll.4229 ff.) and who advises him to change into the clothes of a poor man (l.4243.).

In Sir Beues, it is the woman, Josian, who disguises herself as a leper:

> **While 3he was in Ermonie,**
> **Bope fysik and sirgirie**
> **3he hadde lerned of meisters grete**
> **Of Boloyne þe gras and of Tulete,**
> **Þat 3he knew erbes mani & fale,**
> . . . . . .
> **To make a man in semlaunt þere,**
> **A foule mesel alse 3if a were.**
>
> **(ll.3671 ff.)**

In Partonope, another lady claims to know the virtue of roots and herbs, "How in phisike they haue her worching/The syeke in hele I canne wele bring."[20] In Guy of Warwick it is a monk, "Pe vertu he knewe of mani a gras." (l.1660). A. Ewart's notes to Marie de France's Les Deus Amanz say, with reference to the lady who "en Salerne" was "une parente . . . . /Que mut est saives des mescines." (l.95 ff.), that the School of Salerno was famous from early times for its medical teaching, and that many prescriptions have been preserved under the title "mulieres Salernitanae".[21] That knowledge of herbal remedies was widespread in the Middle Ages becomes clear from all this. But it is difficult to find any contemporary source for the recurring episode in romances of herbs being used to produce the appearance of a leper. There is the possibility that the origin lies in the Tristan legend itself. It

is reasonable, however, to suppose that there was a source outside romance, perhaps in the stories of magic and shape-shifting discussed here in Chapter 4.[22]

A unique episode occurs in Amis and Amiloun (ll.2008 ff.) in which Amiloun, having become a leper, goes to the court of his friend, Amis; unwilling to reveal himself, but bearing a gold cup, a token of friendship between Amis and himself, he is given a drink in a similar cup belonging to Amis, and, when he sees it, draws out his own. Amis, thinking he has killed Amiloun and stolen the cup attacks him:

> **Fram þe bord he resed þan,**
> **& hent his swerd as a wode man**
> . . . . . .
>
> **To þe lazer he stirt in þe wain**
> **& hent him in his honden tvain**
> **& sleynt him in þe lake.**
>
> **(ll.2065 ff.)**

The violent reaction of Amis would have been understandable even in circumstances outside romance, for a cup costing, (as the romance says), three hundred pounds would hardly have been in the legal possession of a leper. Lepers were generally stripped of all their possessions apart from the bare necessities. Even in the most charitable of hospitals, a leper was not even allowed to bequeath more than one-third of the goods kept for him by the hospital. "The other two parts and any other goods received from the hospital or elsewhere are to remain in the hospital, to be used for the benefit of the sick brothers at the discretion of the master."[23]

iv) Minstrels

In the Middle Ages, the simplest means to gain entry to a town or court, if one had no other credentials, was to claim the automatic right of entry of a minstrel. Rarely, if ever, were such men turned away, even if it caused embarrassment to a king. John de Trokelowe gives an account under the year 1317, of a woman disguised as a minstrel presenting a letter critical of Edward II to the court at Westminster. When the King rebuked the porters for admitting her, they excused themselves:

> **dicendo non esse moris regii, alicui menestrallo,**
> **Palatium intrare volenti, in tanta solemnitate aditum denegare.**
> **24**

In just such a way the king in Sir Orfeo gains entrance to the Other World:

> **"Parfay!" quaþe he, "Icham a minstrel, lo!**
> **To solas þi lord wiþ mi gle,**
> **3if his swete wille be".**
> **Þe porter vndede þe 3ate anon,**
> **& lete him in-to þe castel gon.**
> **(11.382 ff.)**

and Orfeo explains to the King:

> **"&, Sir, it is þe maner of ous**
> **To seche mani a lordes house:**
> **Þei we nou3t welcom no be,**
> **3ete we mote proferi forþ our gle."**
> **(11.431 ff.)**

He is, without any further question, given a stay and a hearing.

That such men, and women, were present in towns and courts, especially at times of celebration, is clear from Wace's early account of the coronation of Arthur.[25] Nor were they necessarily musicians. The word ministralli covered a wide field of entertainment:

Mult ost a la cort jugleors
Chanteors, et rumenteors.
Mult poissez oir chancons,
Rotuenges et voialx sous,
Vileors, lais, et notex,
Laiz de vieles, lais de rotez,
Laiz de harpez, laiz de fietalx,
Lires, tempes, et chalemealx
Symphoniez, psalterious,
Monacors, des cymbes, chorous,
Assez i ot tregetours,
Joieresses, et joieors,
Li uns disent contes et fables, . . .

(11.1997 ff.)

In such numbers and variety, they formed more than adequate cover for impostors; like Horn, if one could not maintain credibility as one kind of entertainer, another would do. The romance of King Horn anticipates no difficulties attaching to the hero's attempts to enter Fikenhild's castle:

Harpe he gan schewe,
And tok fela3es fewe,
Of kni3tes suiþe snelle
Þat schrudde hem at wille.
Hi 3eden bi þe grauel
Toward þe castel;
Hi gunne murie singe
And makede here gleowinge.
Rymenhild hit gan ihere,
And axede what hi were.
Hi sede hi weren harpours,
And sume were gigours.

(11.1461 ff.)

Reward for minstrelsy was also automatic. The king of the Other World in Sir Orfeo offers payment as soon as Orfeo has finished playing; indeed the romance pivots on this very custom:

Menstrel, me likeþ wel þi gle.
Now aske of me what it be,
Largelich ichil þe pay.

(11.449 ff.)

King Mark, in Sir Tristrem, speaks similarly to the Irish harper:

"Withouten 3iftes fre"
Mark seyd, "lat me se
Harpi hou þou can,
And what þou askest me
3ive y schal þe þan."

(11.1826 ff.)

Kings were very often generous towards minstrels, and the royal accounts frequently record payments made to entertainers. The following entry was made in the tenth year of the reign of Edward II:

> **To William de Hersham and three others his companions, singing before the King in his chamber at Westminster, of the King's gift, being the price of twenty ells of striped cloth, bought of John Mahoun, and given them to make garments of, 20 s.**
>
> **To Robert Daverouns, violist of the Prince of Tarentum, performing his minstrelsy in the King' s presence, of the King's gift, at Neuburgh, 1st November, 5 l.**
>
> **26**

Early on, failure to reward minstrels was worthy of a remark in chronicle. Joseph Ritson gives an account of Henry III of Germany, nicknamed The Black, who celebrated his wedding at Ingelenheim in 1043. He permitted "an infinite number of minstrels and jugglers" to depart sorrowing, "empty and hungry, without food and rewards". John Bromto, abbot of Jervaux, says he gave the money to the poor instead. Ritson remarks that this was robbing Peter to pay Paul.[27]

Such customs laying themselves open to opportunism, it is not surprising to find the number of impostors grown so large that by the fifteenth century the king's professional minstrels were prompted to complain of them:

> **rudes agricolae et artifices diversarum misterarum Regni nostri Angliae, finxerunt se fore ministrallos, quorum aliqui liberatam nostram eis minime datum portarent, seipsos etiam fingentes esse ministrallos nostros proprios, cujus quidem liberatae ac dictae artis sive occupationis ministrallorum colorae, in diversis partibus regni nostri praedicti, grandes pecuniarum exactiones de ligeis nostris deceptive colligunt et recipiunt, . . .**
>
> **28**

In order to exclude such false minstrels, the king ordered his men to

re-constitute and consolidate the existing guild of the profession.

The incidence of this kind of deception being on such a scale, it is surprising to find it used as a so-called "motif" in only four (though much-quoted) examples of English metrical romance.[29]

We have already seen in Wace and in the chronicle of John de Trokelowe that female minstrels were by no means an unusual feature of medieval entertainment. There is also a genuine, though malevolent, minstralle in the romance of Richard: she is English, and sees through the palmer-disguise of Richard and his companions as they return from a scouting expedition in the Holy Land; their indifference to her prompts her betrayal of them:

When they had drunken well afin,
A minstralle com therin,
And said, "Gentlemen, wittily,
Will ye have any minstrelsy?"
Richard bade that she should go.
That turned him to mickle woe!
The minstralle took in mind,
And saith, "Ye are men unkind;
And if I may, ye shall for- think
Ye gave neither meat nor drink.
For gentlemen should bede
To minstrels that abouten yede
Of their meat, wine and ale;
For los rises of minstrale."
She was English, and well true
By speech, and sight, and hide, and hue.

(11.663 ff.).

Josian, in Sir Beues, had not only learned the arts of physic and surgery in Ermonie; she had learned "of minstralcie/Vpon a fipele for to play/Staumpes, notes garibles gay;" (11.3905 ff.); and when Saber falls sick and cannot earn any money for them, Josian turns to the alternative:

Boute into þe bour3 anon 3he 3ed
And bou3te a fiþele, so saiþe þe tale,
For fourti panes, of ane menstrale;
And alle þe while, þat Saber lay,
Iosion eueriche a day
3ede aboute þe cite wiþ inne,
Here sostenaunse for to winne.

(11.3910 ff.)

Josian has a fellow in Nicolete, from the romance Aucassin et Nicolete, written down in the first half of the thirteenth century; for this heroine also understands the use of herbs and appears temporarily as a jogleor:

(Nicolete) prist une herbe, si en oinst son cief
et son visage, si qu' ele fut tote noire et tainte.
Et ele fist faire cote et mantel et cemisse et braies,
si s'atorna a guise de jogleor.

30

The appearance and dress of minstrels was distinctive. In the case of the profession of private minstrels kept in the great houses, the livery of the lord was worn. Travelling musicians and entertainers are described by Chambers:[31]

> **You might know them from afar by their coats of many colours, gaudier than any knight might respectably wear, by the instruments upon their backs and those of their servants, and by the shaven faces, close-clipped hair and flat shoes proper to their profession.**

Geoffrey of Monmouth also notes the custom of clipping the hair: "rasit capillos suos et barbam, cultumque ioculatoris cum cithara cepit".[32]

Sir Orfeo is the only English romance to describe in any detail the nature of the minstrel-disguise:

His sclauain he dede on also spac
& henge his harpe opon his bac, . . .

(11.343 f.)

As a minstrel of "pouer liif" he goes to test the Steward, and the

people of the town cry out at his destitute appearance:

> **"Lo" þai seyd, "Swiche a man!**
> **Hou long þe here hongeþ him opan!**
> **Lo! Hou his berd hongeþ to his kne!**
> **(11.505 ff.)**

Clearly there were degrees of minstrel ranging from the Kings of Minstrels downwards; Orfeo is deliberately represented at the lowest level, and as one whose appearance is simple to reproduce. Horn and Josian, also, in their disguise, would fit into the lower ranks; the romances seem to assume a knowledge on the part of the audience that their dress would be worth no special mention.

Conclusion

From the foregoing it could be argued that much of the colourful and apparently fictional circumstance in romance was reality in the Middle Ages. The modern reader's distance from, and unfamiliarity with, the details of medieval life and custom do not make the romances "romantic". To a contemporary audience, much of what it heard would have been drawn reassuringly from day-to-day habit or the normal expediencies of living. A great deal of what we regard as the "surprise" element or extravagant literary device (allowable because we are dealing with romance) would have been wholly anticipated by such an audience.

An examination of the circumstances in which disguise occurs shows, too, that what are known as "motifs" more often than not appear in fewer English romances than is generally assumed; disguised combat in eight romances, or minstrel disguise in four, for example.

Indeed, some so-called "motifs" are found more often in historical records than in literature. The word "motif", assuming repetition, not only in number but in type, would seem to be less applicable to the metrical romances than would be surmised from its recurring use in works of criticism.

General Conclusion

The foregoing chapters have suggested some of the origins of the disguise theme in romance. Literary sources include classical legends, native folk-tales and popular stories, and historical records including some which are straightforward accounts and some which closely resemble propaganda. There is evidence from some of these sources that not all forms of disguise were considered dignified or morally suitable for the genre, although acceptable disguise included the foolish and the fantastic. Literary sources, even the most immediate Anglo-Norman versions of a romance, were nearly always adapted by the English authors. Borrowing was a complex procedure, including the incorporation of more than one theme into a narrative synthesis, and the lifting of earlier material, second-hand, from another, near-contemporary romance. English writers often elaborated upon borrowed disguise themes to broaden the sentiment of the narrative, in particular to heighten the comic aspect. The complex relationship between romance and other types of literature, especially religious literature, is shown in an examination of the disguise theme to be a very long one. By the early twelfth century, romances which had borrowed themes from earlier literature were themselves being mined by the writers of the Church.

Still earlier sources of disguise are found in myth and ritual. Again, poets adapted their material, and did not necessarily take into account the pre-existing significance of the rites, customs and games, the Celtic myths and the Norse saga material which they used. The magic and the marvellous in romance often find their unexplained

origins in this material; so, too, do comedy and wit.

Not all sources of the disguise theme were either literary or necessarily early. Travelling, escape and entry in disguise, confusion of identity in battle and in tournament, and the recognition of nobility through the evidence of special knowledge and skills, were contemporary commonplaces rather than purely literary devices or out-dated clichés.

Evidence suggests an enormous breadth and depth in the sources from which the romancers took their disguise (and presumably other) themes. The tendency throughout shows a continuous adaption and synthesis of material on the part of the English poets; departure from sources often indicates an attempt to enlarge the depiction of character and incident, to challenge the artificial definitions of life of the highest concepts of society, and to open the genre to less exclusive sentiments.

The modern perspective on the writers of the Middle Ages is often and necessarily confused. No assumption can be made about the philosophical distances which lie between the medieval poets and ourselves: earlier writers were not necessarily closer to the primitive. Neither can medieval romance be defined as separated from reality: the romance narratives are often exceedingly close to the facts of contemporary life. Support for these arguments can be found in an examination of the single romance theme of disguise.

EXAMPLES OF THE GREAT HELM OR HEAUME; reproduced from "Notices of Armour in the Middle Ages", by the Hon.Robert Curzon, Archaeological Journal, XXII (1865), pp.7-14.

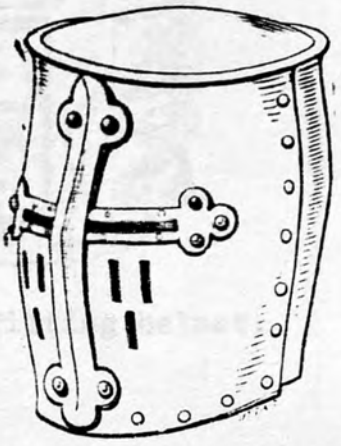

Plate I Cylindrical helmet with closed visor. Date; c. 1150.

Plate II
Cylindrical helmet. Closed visor; c.1190.

Plate III
Cylindrical helmet. Closed visor. Thirteenth century.

Plate IV. Cylindrical helmet. Thirteenth century. Tower Armoury.

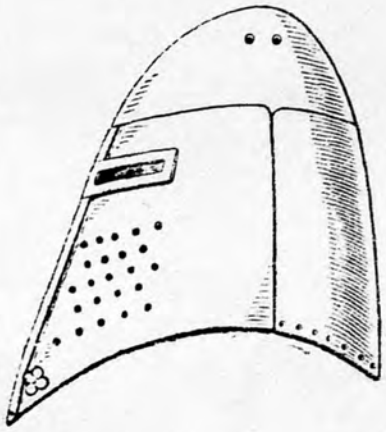

Plate V. Tilting helmet; c. 1325.

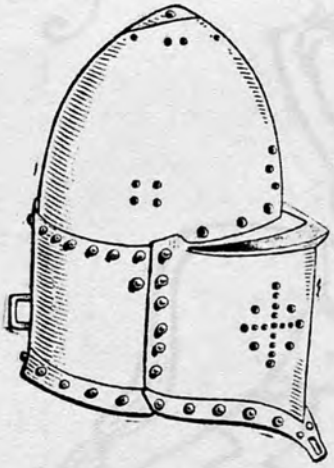

Plate VI. Tilting helmet; c. 1380.

Plate VII. Tilting helmet. Fourteenth century.

Plate VIII. Departure for the tournament: helm already fitted. Bib. Nationale MS. fr. 2186. f. 8v. Fourteenth century.

Plate IX. Matthew Paris' drawing of two Templars ready -armed in helmets. B.L. MS. Roy. 14C. viii. f. 42v. Thirteenth century.

P A R T III

THE INFLUENCE OF THE DISGUISE THEME

CHAPTER 6

ROMANTIC DISGUISE IN THE TOURNAMENT AND IN COURTLY ENTERTAINMENT.

From the early thirteenth century to the beginning of the second quarter of the sixteenth century the romances were strongly influential in the outdoor contests of the tournament, and in the indoor entertainments of the court. The disguise theme was not the least of the romance elements which were translated into these shows and spectacles.

In the field, the tournament was transformed from a physically dangerous and politically disruptive sport into a display of skills and riches; this change was positively encouraged by the sovereigns fearful for their own and their country's security on the one hand, and on the other, anxious to gain personal prestige and a spirit of national unity from every public occasion. The political emasculation of the tournament was aided also by the declining importance of cavalry tactics in late medieval warfare. What had once been a preparation and an exercise for battle was reduced, perforce, to a game. The tournament, having had its immediacy and reality slowly wrested from it, turned to romance for an alternative raison d'être. There it found the glorious ancestors of the King and his nobility, a unifying code of honour and comradeship, and an example of noble combat. As the spectacle of the tournament grew more lavish, romance provided ready-made scenes to enact, characters to portray, and costumes and scenery with which to magnify these borrowed images on the field. One of the most popular themes of the tournament was that of disguised

combat from the romances - a game which even kings played.

Courtly entertainments indoors had already preserved a tradition of disguise, or visoring, in the annual Christmas mumming. When the trappings of the tournament shows moved into the hall for prize-giving and celebratory feasting and dancing, the disguise of romance was easily accommodated within an organised, multiform entertainment which came to be known as a "disguising". The disguising became more elaborate combining music, dancing, choral singing, moral and love-allegory, débat, combat at the barriers, sophisticated scenic devices and costumes and, not least, a tradition of disguise. This complex form developed, in the early sixteenth century, into the dramatic form known as the masque.

a) The Dramatic Development of the Tournament.

From its recorded beginnings in 1127 the history of the tournament in England, despite its popularity, is one of opposition, restraint, adaption and, finally, transformation. Once established, change was forced upon the English tournament for two reasons. The first was the political need to regularise the sport, originally a miniature war with all its attendant hazards, so that bloodshed, feud and the possibility of civil conflict could be largely avoided. A secondary political consideration was national unity and the personal prestige of the king: at a time when chroniclers were seeking Britain's founders in Troy and the ancestors of the king in the lineage of Arthur, we find the emergence of Arthurian tournaments in which the sovereign and the nobility display their martial skills whilst playing

the parts of Arthur and his knights. The second reason for change lies within the changing nature of warfare for which the tournament was often both preparation and practice. By the third decade of the fourteenth century, tactics had changed so as to place a greater reliance on archers and foot-soldiers than on cavalry; horse and lance were becoming obsolete and, with them, the tournament.

From this point on the tournament becomes increasingly a dramatic spectacle. Skill and daring remain important, but the theatrical element grows, with deliberate imitations of Arthurian and other romances "choreographed" for the occasion, dukes and earls assigned parts, and fantastic costumes tailored and distributed at great expense: there is early evidence, too, of prepared dialogue and scenic effects. In keeping with the romance, knights were encouraged to disguise themselves with the bearings and devices of others, and kings jousted incognito. This continued to the end of the medieval period and beyond, in the reign of Henry VIII. From this disguised tournament and its attendant celebrations emerged the early Tudor pageants and the courtly entertainments which developed into the masque.

Following on the earliest record of an organised tournament, in 1127 at Würzburg, come records also of criticism and prohibition of the sport. In England, tournaments had been censured by William

and Henry I. In 1130 they were prohibited by Pope Innocent III, at the council of Clermont, who argued that the crusade was a more knightly pursuit than the wanton and potentially fatal tournament. Lateran Councils in 1139 and 1179 reinforced the prohibition, and so did Eugenius III at the Synod of Rheims in 1148. To persist in the tourney meant death or corruption of the soul in the view of the Church.[1] Knights who died in the contest were given Extreme Unction, but were not allowed church burial. In some cases, excommunication was in force for the combatants. Contemporary art depicts the tournament as attended by devils ready to seize the souls of the fallen.[2]

The violent and uncontrollable nature of the contests provided ample justification for such criticism. Originally, the tournament comprised two teams of knights fighting ostensibly within a set time limit, and with prescribed weapons. Some formal agreements were made concerning battle swords or blunted weapons and the types of blow allowed. But many tournaments were conducted á l'outrance, and it is difficult to see how, once begun, they could have been contained by rules. There were no individual jousts, only a mêlée in which one knight might easily be confronted with three or four others. Moreover, early tournaments were not limited within enclosures or barriers; contests were frequently fought over an area of several square miles.

Judges, if they were ever appointed (there is no early record of this happening), would surely have been exercised either to observe infringements or to penalise them under such conditions. Most historians and commentators on the tournament agree that it did not fall far short of a brawl,[3] and contemporary accounts quite frequently record brutal accidents and censure individual combatants.[4]

Popular as this kind of sport was, it was politically unacceptable. Tournaments proliferated and exacerbated long-standing quarrels between powerful members of the nobility, threatening civil stability, and provided rebellious barons with an opportunity to remove supporters of the king. With the strong central government which was established under Henry II came a total ban on the sport in England, which remained in enforcement until Richard I restored it under the royal control of licence in 1194: the date and nature of the ban are not recorded, but its strength was such as to drive even the sons of Henry himself across the Channel for their tournament adventures.[5] On the Continent, tournaments continued unabated with few and ineffective restraints laid upon them. In the reigns of John and Henry III, prohibitions were followed by flagrant breaches of observance and, worse still, by serious divisions between the French members of the court and the English barony. In 1241, 1248 and 1257, incidents occurred so

violent as to risk civil war.[6] In 1267 Edward I was forced, in the cause of national order, to draw up the Statuta Armorum which regularised the contest.[7] The statute reduced arms-bearers to the knights themselves, their personal squires and the heralds of the tournament: knights, cadets and standard-bearers only were allowed to wear armour: others found bearing arms and armour could be imprisoned for periods up to seven years. An entire ban was laid upon pointed swords, knives, sticks and clubs; and all followers were to make themselves recognisable by the colours or devices of their lords. This was the first major attempt to modify the tournament in England. It was, however, only partially successful.

Following the statute were a number of riotous occasions on which tournaments developed into total disorder. In 1288, for example, two gangs of squires organising a buhurt (dressing incidentally, as friars and canons) burnt down half the town of Boston;[8] and the familiar pattern of bans returned. Politically insecure himself, Edward II banned tournaments which did not carry a licence obtained from the king. In the year of the ban, 1323, only two licences were obtained, for Lincoln and for Northampton.

By 1333, however, a new factor emerged which would bring about

a change not in the conduct of the tournament, but in its function. At the battle of Halidon Hill Edward III developed a new battle strategy which was to be gloriously employed at Crécy. Instead of using the conventional cavalry charge to break up the opposing force, he employed the deadly long-bow as an offensive weapon, and knights on foot as solid defence.[9] After Crécy, no major cavalry victory is recorded, and only sixty-four years later the last cavalry battle was fought at Grünwald. Within just a few years the tournament had become irrelevant to contemporary warfare, and as a preparation for battle had to give way to practice, by law, at the butts.

Abroad, the third factor which was to contribute to the decline of the tournament as a martial sport had already emerged. Following the upsurge of interest in the Arthurian legends, and the flourishing in Europe of chivalric literature during the last half of the twelfth century, comes a spate of recorded events, most of them tournaments, in which deliberate attempts to imitate the romances are found.

The earliest of these is the ceremony in 1223 in which Jean d'Ibelin, lord of Baruth (Beirut) knighted his eldest son. Philippe de Navarre writes:

> **A cele chevalerie fu la plus grant feste et la plus longue qui fust onques desa mer que l'on sache. Mout i ot donné et despendu et bouhordé et contrefait les aventures de Bretaigne et de la Table ronde at moult de manieres de jeus.**
>
> 10

Following this in 1225 at Freisach was a joust in which Ulrich von Lichtenstein first presented himself, and then disappeared into the city; he re-appeared later dressed in entirely different armour on a horse barded in green, and accompanied by eleven boys dressed also in green.[11] This was one of many German tournaments which was patronised by a prince; for in that country the sport had already become "an instrument of imperial and princely prestige",[12] and events organised by private individuals were often taken over by royalty for political reasons. In this case, the tournament begun by Ulrich proceeded under the aegis of Frederick II. In 1226 at Mercersberg, the earliest known romance imitation occurred in a joust held by a knight named Waltman. Mimicking Guy of Warwick, the knight proclaimed the joust in honour of his lady, and announced that whoever was able to overthrow him might expect him to surrender his lady, his palfrey and harness, his hawk and hounds; those he conquered were to give him and his lady a gold ring each.[13] These were also the terms of the Magdeburg tournament in 1281. An old merchant of Goslere won the lady, but gave her away together with a dowry.[14] In 1227 the Venusfahrt of Ulrich von Lichtenstein took place, followed by the Artusfahrt in 1240. On each occasion, dressed as Venus and as King Arthur, Ulrich undertook the tour

of jousts in honour of a lady. Already the notion of honour and a show of gallantry had become as important as the display of skill, and the elaborate costume arrangements appear to emphasise the importance of being seen to command all the virtues, of love as well as of courage, belonging to the chivalric knight. The Artusfahrt had particular reference to the knight of romance, since Ulrich contrived to joust with men representing Lancelot, Ivain, Erec, Tristan and Perceval: in a contest with a certain Kadolt, Ulrich was preparing for his second joust when a beautiful damsel rode ostentatiously to him declaring that her lord Kadolt could withstand no more.[15] Interestingly, Ulrich, on most occasions so alert to the opportunity to boast, makes no claim to the invention of this form of entertainment.

Perhaps the most interesting of all the early recorded tournaments in Europe in the thirteenth century is that held in Hesdin in Flanders in 1235. It is the first record of a "Round Table" which is named as such.[16] The object of this event was to gather together knights who were pledging themselves to a crusade. Ruth Cline notes that it was Philip of Flanders (who died in 1190) who was a patron of Chrétien de Troyes and commissioned him to write Perceval.[17] From this date on, Round Tables and romantic imitations in the tournament abound on the Continent; they include the joust at Valencia in 1269, at Ham in 1278, at

Saragossa in 1286, Barcelona in 1290, Bar-sur-Aube in 1294, Bruges in 1300, Prague in 1319 and the "Alexander" joust at Valenciennes in 1345, in which the prize was a peacock, and the names of the winning knights were those of the knights of Alexander.[18]

Meanwhile in England in 1242, although there is no surviving record of such an event taking place at a previous date, Henry III issued a ban on a Round Table.[19] This presumes a development in the English tournament parallel and simultaneous with that on the Continent. Within ten years Round Tables had returned in England, and records of three of them tell us something of their nature, and of the changes which were taking place in the English contest.

Matthew Paris notes the first example, at Wallenden in 1252.[20] He records the death of Arnold de Montigny at the hand of Roger de Lemburn who was found to have used an edged sword. Whether this was a deliberate act or not is not told, but the very fact that it is mentioned by the chronicler suggests that the Round Table was a contest in which weapons were normally rebated in order to avert injury and death. Adding to his description, Matthew writes that the fatality occurred "non ut in hastiludio, quod Torneamentum dicitur, sed potius in illo ludo militari qui Mensa Rotunda dicitur."[21] With no further information the conclusion can be drawn that there was an acknowledged distinction between the two forms of sport.

The celebrations at Edward I's wedding feast in London in 1254 (before his ascension to the throne) are described as including a tafelronde of knights and squires, and a performance of a spel of King Arthur.[22] This is the first recorded example of romance imitation in English tournaments but, given that these festivities were prepared for a royal wedding, the elaborate nature of the performance suggests that it is not likely to have been the first held. For the spel, men were dressed as Lancelot, Walwain, Perceval, Aggravain, Bohort, Gariet, Lyonel, Mordred and Kaye: there was also a Loathly Lady, "her nose a foot long and a palm in width, her ears like those of an ass, coarse braids hanging down to her girdle, a goiter (sic.) on her long red neck, two teeth projecting a finger's length from her wry mouth," and so on.[23] Certain scenes from French romances were enacted, costume and make-up were employed, dialogue was prepared and the figure of Sir Kaye was used comically. Loomis observes that "these jousts were not simply an opportunity for the impersonators of Arthur's knights to show their prowess", and adds that if the parts "were written down and had survived one might speak legitimately of medieval Arthurian dramatic sketches."[24]

Here is clear indication that by this date the tournament in England had become as much a designed spectacle and entertain-

ment as a contest, and that for the theatrical element the designers drew upon romance. The third record of a Round Table occurring in this decade is the one in 1257. As though it can be assumed that tourneying is only incidental at such an event, the Worcester Annals note that it "sat", not "was fought", at Warwick.[25]

The influence of romance not only tempered the potentially dangerous effect of the tournaments on civil order, but offered a second political advantage. Just as the princes of Germany had used the spectacle to enhance their own prestige so, later, did the heads of the English realm. The English, however, had one additional trump card; the greatest figure in romance had already been claimed in Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace and La3amon, as the ancestor of the English kings. Henry II had exploited this potential source of national pride and unity in the twelfth century, aided by his culturally-aware consort, Eleanor. England, under Edward I, a king bent on order and unification, was to see the tournament not only tamed under the influence of Arthurian romance, but transformed into a symbol of English nationalism. Roger Mortimer (of Wigmore) appears to have been the first Englishman to be aware of the possibilities of Arthurian tournament. He held Round Tables at Kenilworth in 1279 and again in 1281, and it

has been argued by M.R. Griffin that in these events Mortimer was attempting to claim his own descent from Arthur.[26] Whether this is so or not, there is little doubt about the intention which lay behind Edward's Round Table in Caernarvonshire in 1284 to celebrate his victory over Llewellyn. During the festivities, which included dancing so boisterous as to cause a building to collapse, the King was presented with the crown of Arthur, which had most fortunately just been discovered.[27] In 1302 Edward, whilst organising the Scottish marches on the Welsh model, held a similar Round Table at Falkirk to celebrate the New Year and to symbolise his authority over the whole of Britain, including the rebellious Scots.[28] In Edward II's reign there is record of the Stepney Tournament in 1309 in which the masquerade of the "rex de Vertbois" was performed.[29] Withington claims that this was a borrowing from romance,[30] although the date seems extremely early for this to have been a possibility. Nevertheless "dressing-up", a strong feature of this king's reign, appears to have become an element of the tournament also. It is Edward III, again possibly prompted by the Round Tables of Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, held at Bedford and Wigmore in 1328, who exploited to the full the costumed theatricality of the tournament and the theme of disguised combat from the romances.

Once again, the direction of change in the English tournament

had been anticipated in Europe. In 1278 at Ham a tournois was held in which Robert II, Count of Artois, contrived to assign Arthurian characters to himself and members of his court including the ladies, and to Marie de Brabant, Queen of France; for himself he reserved the part of the Chevalier au Lyon, and to Marie he gave the part of Queen Genievre. A plot was designed, which ran briefly as follows:

The Sire de Longueval and the Sire de Basentin, in consultation with Dame Courtoisie, proclaim a tournament to be held at Ham: many are to attend from Britain, including Keu and Genievre with seven hundred knights and ladies. The Queen is at supper when her cousin Soredamours comes before her riding a hackney led by a dwarf. Keu questions her. She turns to greet the Queen and her company, and is rebuked by Keu: the Queen bids him be silent. Soredamours asks the Queen for her help in rescuing her lover lured from Carduel and imprisoned by Dame de Hebrison. The Queen gives her promise and all the knights arm themselves in preparation. Keu demands the honour of the rescue as a feudal right, and receives it. On to the field comes a villainous knight to oppose Keu; and Keu makes ready.

The narrative then reverts to a previous adventure involving the Chevalier au Lyon, who refuses to reveal his identity, but whom all

the ladies recognise as none other than the Count of Artois.

Meanwhile,Keu is fighting his foe. Both are still unhurt when the Count arrives with a band of rescued ladies. Keu greets him with a rebuke, but the Queen welcomes him warmly. There then enters a damsel on a white hackney pursued by a knight and a dwarf who are whipping her for asserting that the knights of the queen are the best. In an ensuing joust a knight, Wautier de Hardecourt defends the Queen's cause and defeats the knight. The damsel runs to embrace Keu, but the Queen sends him off to prepare supper.[31] Here is the second recorded entry into the tournament of the disguise or undisclosed identity theme, Ulrich's Freisach joust being the first. This event, though, involves a whole court and its leaders in a choregraphed and dramatised performance. It was to be the pattern for forty years of hastiludia in the reign of Edward III.

For September 22nd, 1331, there is mention in the chronicles of a "celeberrimum hastiludium" held in Cheap by William of Montacute.[32] To the lists rode the King and his court, "omnes splendidu apparatu vestiti et ad similitudinem Tartarorum larvati."[33] These were followed by a procession of squires and minstrels preceding the knights all dressed in velvet cloaks and leading their ladies at the end of long silver chains. These ridings or pageantic tourneys were clearly popular, for there was another such, again

named hastiludium, in 1343:

> **. . . . fuerunt pulchra hastiludia in Smethfield, ubi papa et duodecim cardinales per tres dies contra quoscumque tirocinium habuerunt.**
>
> **34**

It appears that by this date jousting in some kind of elaborate dress, with a procession beforehand displaying the theme for the hastiludia, had become very much a part of the sport. In 1344, Edward surpassed all that had gone before, and held the Round Table hastiludes at Windsor on the theme of Arthur.

There is no doubt that, apart from his love of the theatrical, Edward at this date was looking for some popular means to acquire national support. For the last six years, his wars in France had continued without result, his resources were dwindling, and his vast borrowings were already bankrupting the Lombard money-lenders in London. The spirit of hazard and unity he sought Arthur was to provide. Towards the close of 1343 Edward, having decided to hold a Round Table, sent heralds into Burgundy, Hainault, Scotland, Flanders, Brabant and Germany with invitations to attend "hastiludia et justas generales" on 19th January, 1344.[35] On the first of January, he issued letters of safe conduct to knights and esquires of all nations who wished to come, taking them, their servants and goods under his especial protection for the

duration of their journey, sojourn and return.[36] With such a flourish the greatest of the Round Tables was begun. Two kings, two queens, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cornwall, ten earls and nine countesses attended. The King, with nineteen of his finest knights, jousted with all comers for three days. After this, Edward extended the project and rebuilt a house in Windsor Park, calling it the Round Table: it was two hundred feet in diameter. Some time before 1356, he added a circular table for which fifty-two oaks were needed.[37] The expenses of John Marreys, the royal tailor, indicate that the Round Table was held again at Windsor in 1345 and that robes and other garments were made for this occasion.

Following this are numerous other records of costumed hastiludes held by the King, and evidence that disguised jousting had become part of the entertainment. For the tourney at Lichfield in 1347 Marreys made for the King a jousting harness worked with the arms of Sir Thomas de Bradeston. The account reads:

> **Ex ad faciendum unum harnesium pro corpore Regis de armis domini Thome de Bradestone pro hastiludiis Regis apud Lychefeldum poudratum cum rosis et aliis operibus de serico.**
>
> **38**

Other hastiludes are mentioned in the accounts, being those at Canterbury, Bury, Windsor, Reading and Eltham. At Canterbury, the King gave to the Prince of Wales, the Earl of Lancaster and

six other knights, eight jousting harnesses bearing the arms, Azure, three Roses Argent, of Sir Stephen de Cosynton. He also had made eight tunics and hoods for knights and twelve masks for ladies, in roan, sindon, gold leaf and Cyprus gold, to be worn at the hastiludes.[39] For the Christmas of 1347, the King held a hastilude at Guildford, where he jousted all in white, with a shield inscribed:

> **Hey, hey, the whyte swan,**
> **By Godes soule I am thy man.**

Wardrobe accounts show a shift from jousting in costume and disguise to fantastic kinds of dressing up. Visors in the likeness of men, women and angels are listed, together with curious crests, and costumes representing dragons, peacocks and swans.

> **Et ad faciendum ludos domini Regis ad festum Natalis domini celebratum apud Guldefordum anno Regis xxj, in quo expendebantur xxiiij tunicae de bokeram diversorum colorum, xlij viseres diversorum similitudunum, xxviij crestes, xiiij clocae depictae, xiiij capita draconum, xiiij tunicae albae, xiiij capita pavonum cum alis, xiiij tunicae depictae cum oculis pavonum, xiiij capita cygnorum cum suis alis, xiiij tunicae de tela linea depictae, xiiij tunicae depictae cum stellis de auro et argento vapulatis.**
>
> **40**

The entries for Otford and Merton, in 1348 and 1349 respectively, also contain lists of materials for lions' and elephants' heads, costumes for virgins and wild men of the woods, and dragon-like masks.

> **Et ad faciendum ludos Regis ad festum Natalis domini anno Regis xxij celebratum apud Ottefordum ubi expendebantur viseres videlicet xij capita hominum**

> **et desuper tot capita leonum xij capita hominum et tot capita elephantum, xij capita hominum alis vespertilionum, xij capita de wodewose, xiiij capita virginum, xiiij supertunicae de worsted rubro guttatae cum auro et lineatae et reversatae et totidem tunicae de worsted viridi. . . . . Et ad faciendum ludos Regis in festo Epiphaniae domini celebrato apud Mertonum ubi expendebantur xiij visers cum capitibus draconum et xiij visers cum capitibus hominum habentibus diademata, xc tepies de bokeram nigro et tela linea Anglica.**
>
> **41**

The last great recorded joust of Edward's reign occurred in 1374 at Smithfield, to which a great train of lords and ladies processed through Cheap from the Tower of London. Each costumed lady led her lord by his horse's bridle until the field was reached; whereupon the King, to the fascination and horror of his audience, enthroned his mistress, decked in the dead Queen's jewels, as the Lady of the Sun. To this theme the jousting was displayed for seven days.[42]

By the close of the fourteenth century in England, then, the tournament had become a theatrical spectacle in which the sport of jousting was only a part. Large-scale tournaments often carried a theme taken from the romances, and Arthurian themes were particularly favoured by kings and others whose interest in politics was as keen as their interest in sport. Spectacle required costume and masking, and the disguised combat of the romances contributed ideas for this: Edward III encouraged his followers to joust in the arms of others, in some sophisticated game of identity, and on at least one occasion did so himself.

The masking of attendants in the likeness of peacocks, lions, swans, virgins and "wodewoses" is also most likely to have been

prompted by the romances; Edward III's adoption of the Knight-of-the-Swan theme clearly originates here. Evidence of the insertion of dialogue carrying romance plots, and of elaborate processions, moves the tournament even closer towards theatre. It is worth bearing in mind that at the turn of the century the earliest surviving Moral Interlude was performed - The Castle of Perseverance (c. 1405) - whose dramatic structure is borrowed directly from the popular form of tournament discussed here.[43]

In the fifteenth century the romantic tournament was as popular as ever. At some date between 1452 and 1475 a letter was written by Jean de Bourbon to his brother Pierre explaining an attempt to collect the rules of tournaments from Arthurian romances of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The tract on the tournoys falls into three parts: the form of the tournament in the days of Arthur and Uter; the oaths which the companions of the Round Table took on admission to the order; and the names of a hundred and fifty of the knights and a representation of their arms.[44]

The theme of disguise, too, was far from forgotten. In 1416 Richard, Earl of Warwick, clearly finding the French wars tedious, sent a challenge to the court of the French king under the name of the Chevaler Vert: the invitation was to a three-day tournament. John Rous tells in what manner and guise Richard received his opponents:[45]

> **. . . . their lettres were sent to the kyngs coorte of Fraunce, and anone other 3 Frenche knyghtes received them, and graunted their felowes to mete at day and place assigned. Here shewes howe as it is said afore these lettres were received, to the first applied hymself a noble knyght, called Sir Gerard**

> **Herbawines, that called hymself the Chevaler Ruge; to the second answered a famous knyght Sir Hugh Laundy, callyng hymself the Chevaler Blanke; and to the thyrde agreed an excellent knyght called Sir Colard Fymes.**
>
> **Here shows how erle Richard on the firste day that was the xii day of Christmasse, comyng to the felde, his face covered, a bussh of Estrich fethers on his hede, his horse trapped with the armes of oone of his auncestres the lorde Tony, and at the third course he caste to the grounde at his spere poynt behynde the horse taile, the knyght called the Chevaler Ruge; and then the erle with cloose visar retourned unknowed to his pavilyon. And forthwith he sent to the said knyght a fair courser.**

On the second day Richard, with visor closed, fights the "blank knyghte" and wins, "and hymself unknown rode to his pavilion ageyn, and sent to his blank knyght Sir Hugh Lawney, a good courser". On the third day Richard rode to Sir Colard Fymes and defeated him. He "sent to Sir Colard a good courser, and fested all the people, gevyng the said three knyghtes gret rewards, and rode to Calys with great worshipe".[46]

In 1468, at the marriage festivities of Margaret of York, a certain Jehan de Chassa of Burgundy requested permission to joust as "a slave born in the realm of slavery" (presumably of love). Another, unknown knight, jousted under the name of "serviteur de la dame de l'Isle celée."[47]

Romance themes, particularly those of disguise, became extremely popular in the early,active years of Henry VIII's reign. Whether it was because of the resurgence of interest in romance (Henry VII had, like his predecessors, made political use of the Arthurian legends),[48] or whether the chronicler Edward Hall found the description of pageant and spectacle very much to his taste, there is a dense record of tourneying in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

In 1509 the King and William Compton jousted incognito at Richmond; in the same year was held a mumming in which the King and the court appeared in Turkish, Russian and Prussian costumes; in 1510 the birth of Katherine's firstborn was celebrated with the Jousts of les Quater Chivalers de la forreste salvigne, in which the Marquis Dorset and Sir Thomas Bulleyn disguised themselves as pilgrims of St. James; at Greenwich in 1513, Sir Thomas Knevet jousted in "a Castle of Cole blacke"; in the same year the King and the Duke of Suffolk defended the tilt dressed as white and black hermits; and in 1526 at Greenwich there was held a jousting débat in which three knights argued and fought upon the superiority of riches and love, the conclusion being judged by "an olde man with a silver berd".[49]

By this date, however, a new development had taken place in the tournament. With the Pas d'Armes de la Bergière produced by René d'Anjou in 1449, came the introduction of Pastoralism, similar to that found in Renaissance literature, and allegory.[50] The pastoral element was supplied at this tournament by René's mistress, Jeanne Laval who played the part of a shepherdess, sitting amongst her sheep at the centre of the festivities while two knights fought on her behalf; one bore a black shield, the other a white one. Loys de Beauvau explains the significance of this:

> **There you may see two jousting shields attached to a tree: one white signifying joy (liesse), devoid of all other colour: and the other black, signifying discontent (tristesse). . . . . For those who may wish to know more, the white shield is for those who are happily in love; the other for those who are not.**
> **51**

Although jousting in colours had long been familiar from the romances, the allegorical significance is here explained for the first time. Wickham[52] remarks that the meanings of many colours had been standardized by the rules laid down for their use in the vestments of the Church, and that the process was continued in the codes of heraldry.[53] He is not clear, though, as to whether René and his contemporaries were the first to use colours whose significance was explained in the tournament, or whether, as is more likely, the significance of colours in tournament and in romance had always been known.

In England, the Lady of the Sun hastiludes of 1375 had contained an element of allegory: but it was under the Tudors that the imaginative creation of allegorical parts in the tournament flourished. In 1511, for example, Henry VIII and three other knights fought under the names of "Cure loial", "Bon voloire", "Bon espoir" and "Valiaunt desire".[54] On the first day of May in the same year a three-day tilt was introduced by a pageant on the subject of the ship of Fame, which was laden with Renown, and sailed past the bay of Hardiness and the point of Gentleness.[55] Such allegories are found in jousts recorded in 1516 at Shooter's Hill, in 1517 at Greenwich, in 1522 at Cardinal Wolsey's pageant, in June 1522 at London and at Windsor, at Gray's Inn in 1526, and at Anne's coronation in 1534.[56] The grafting of displayed moral virtues on to the traditional costuming of the joust had now begun to transform romantic disguise into allegory, and the tournament into pageant.

The disguise theme of the romances had now run its course

in the English tournament. It had helped to civilize the contest and had gained political prestige for kings; it had also helped to promote a feeling of national heritage and unity. It was instrumental in transforming an already changing sport into a colourful spectacle and, later, into a related form of theatre. With changing tastes in the Renaissance, disguise and the alteration of identity were overtaken by symbolism and personification; warfare was overtaken by pageant, and the strife of the battle and the virtues of physical courage became less important than the strife and virtues of life and love. Disguise, from this point on, was to move indoors with other trappings of the tournament, and was to find a new place in the early development of the masque.

b) The Disguising and the Masque.

The spectacular entertainment attached to the tournament embraced, by the end of the fourteenth century, dramatised versions of romance plots, dialogue and costume, in large part stemming from Arthurian and other romances, and often imitating disguise themes from those romances. With the entry of allegorical and pageantic forms of drama into the tournament festivities, dialogue and characterisation increased, as did scenic effects. Romance influence, however, tended to diminish or to be used only indirectly as, for example, in the popular castle-assault theme: disguise made way for allegorical personification, particularly that associated with the Courts of Love. With this development came the migration of the field entertainments to indoor festivities frequently held at the end of the contests.

Here the disguise theme of the romances met with an old tradition of disguise associated with the Christmas mumming. Courtiers who had been encouraged to joust incognito were now invited to participate in masked feasting and dancing which came to be known as a disguising; they were also required to attire themselves, as they had already done in the tournament, for prepared parts in a ludus or interlude to be performed during the evening. The strong allegorical bias which had been developed in the dramatic scenes attached to the tournament carried over into the interlude. The poet Lydgate, for whom allegory was a stock-in-trade, was one of the first to develop the interlude as an entertainment. By the fifteenth century, allegorical drama, mime, dialogue, dancing, music and disguising had combined to form an elaborate masking or masque. William Cornish, whose first recorded design and production of one of these in 1501 anticipated Jonson by a hundred years, was above all others a creative force in the development of this complex art form.[1]

The first step towards drama had been taken by the English tournament with the disguise of the individual combatants. Elaboration upon this theme necessarily included additional disguised characters, usually other members of the court, (some of them women), and sometimes included plot. To place characters and plot, appropriate scenery was required - castles for the knights and for abducted ladies, cabins for hermits, and trees and fountains for perilous encounters. René d'Anjou had furnished his pastoral tourney with a flock of sheep and trees on which to hang the black and white shields, - if not more than this; some kind of castle, possibly portable or wearable, had been

fashioned for the Greenwich jousts in 1513.[2] In 1517 the same field saw the design of a forest of trees and a mechanically opening and closing rock which produced warring knights and received disappearing disguisers. Hall describes the occasion thus:

> **. . . and out of a cave in the said Rock came x. knights, armed at all poyntes, and foughte together a fayre tournay. And when they were severed and departed, the disguysers dissended from the rock, and daunced a great space: and sodeynly the rocke moved and receaved the disguysers, and ymediatly closed agayn. Then entred a person called Reaport, appareled in crymosin satyn full of tongues, sitting on a flyeng horse with wynges and fete of gold called, Pegasus. Thys person in Frenche declared the meaning of the rocke and the trees and the Tournay.**
> [3]

Scenic effects clearly had an additional function; like costumed characters, they could be disguised with a symbolic identity. Castles were particularly popular imports from romance. Cardinal Wolsey had one produced for his entertainment for the King and his Ambassadors in 1522. This castle held eight ladies personifying the feminine virtues of love, and was surrounded by eight more ladies characterising the female rejection of love. To this place came the King (having the part presented to him) and seven other gentlemen disguised as the amorous virtues of the noble suitor; and thereupon a Battle of Confectionary took place.[4]

The castle used in tournament often gave opportunity for fiercer activity, and an armed assault upon one of these was by no means uncommon. Sydney Anglo[5] cites an early example of a mock siege as early as 1214 - the famous Castello d'Amore of Treviso - again an allegorical device. In England in 1524 Henry VIII was still favouring the castle assault in the Christmas

jousts at Greenwich: for this he had a fortress specially built, to be named "the castle of Loyalty". After the assault and other combats, a romance-type scene was enacted proclaiming the virtues of age:

> . . . . sodainly entered into the feld, twoo ladies on twoo palfies, in greate robes of purple damaske, leadyng twoo ancient knightes, with beardes of silver, in the same apparell, and when they came before the Queene, thei put vp a bill to her, the effect whereof was, that although youth had left them, and age was come, and would lette theim to do feactes of armes: Yet courage, desire, and good will abode with theim . . . .
>
> 6

Romance influence in the tournament contests and games, then, was still very strong at the beginning of the second quarter of the sixteenth century. Its most frequent representative in the Renaissance was the castle and the siege-assault. The reason for the continuing popularity of this romance image may well lie in its ready adaptability to the purposes of allegory. The Roman de la Rose, begun in 1237, had already created the Castle of Jealousy and the Tower of Shame in love-allegory;[7] and in the last half of the fourteenth century Langland, in religious allegory, had used the Tower of Truth and the Castle of Unity.[8] The romance figures of the knight, the fair lady and the old man or hermit, were, of course, infinitely accommodating to the requirements of allegory. After 1524, however, the Greenwich joust being the last major tournament in which Henry took part personally, the list of jousts in which the King and his followers disguised themselves after the fashion of the romances[9] comes to an end. Appearing at this point, though, is an increase in the use of disguise, already an important part of indoor entertainments which traditionally rounded off the tournaments.

Prize-giving, feasting and dancing had long been the end to a day's jousting. Glynne Wickham argues that these indoor festivities formed the basis of what was to be known as the disguising.[10] He adds that the importation of symbolic costume and scenic background, from the field to the hall, for the performance of an indoor entertainment, would have been the next obvious development. In Paris in 1378 and 1389 there were recorded performances of The Conquest of Jerusalem and The Siege of Troy which took place at a banquet. Froissart describes a castle for Troy, and a ship and a pavilion for the Greeks, all moved into place on wheels which were hidden from view.[11] In England, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the highly-favoured castle scenery was moved into the hall. Thus at Greenwich in 1511:

> **And against Newieres night, was made in the hall a castle, gates, towers, and a dungion, garnished with artilerie and weapon after the most warlike fashion: and on the front of the castle was written le Fortresse dangerus, and within the castle were vi. ladies, . . . These vi. (the King and five other gentlemen) assaulted the castle, the ladies seying them so lustie and coragious, were content to solace with them, and upon farther communicacion, to yeld the castle, and so thei came donne . . .**
>
> **12**

Hall records a similar mock-siege, performed indoors in 1515 at Eltham, again with a castle large enough to hold ladies and knights.[13]

Earlier than these, though, is an elaborate description of a castle-spectacle, named a "disguising". This was part of the indoor festivities which followed the Wedding Tournament of 1501.[14] Lords and ladies of the court took part, and special costumes were

designed for them: they are said in the description to be "disguised". The record describes the beginning of the performance thus:

> **. . . . then began and entered this most goodly and pleasant disguising convayed and showed in pageants proper and subtile, of whom the first was a Castle, right cunningly devised, sett with chaines of gold. . . .**
>
> **15**

Four great beasts attend the castle:

> **. . . . in evrych of the whiche IIII bests were II men, oon in the fore parte, and another in the hynde parte, secretly hide and apparellid, nothing seene but their legges, and yet thoes were disguysid aftr the proporcion and kynde of the bests that they were in . . . .**
>
> **16**

There is also some description of the castle and its occupants:

> **And thus this castle was . . . convayed from the nether part of the hall . . . There were within the ladyes, looking out of the windowes of the same, and in the foure corners of this castle were iiii turretts . . . in whiche . . . . was a little child apparelled like a maiden.**
>
> **17**

To this scenery and costume was added singing, dramatic dialogue, a mock-assault and a final dance. This, Sydney Anglo suggests,[18] was the first disguising, as over against the lavish, but dislocated attempts at small individual entertainments in hall which had gone before. Certainly it was an organised amalgam of many arts, to which the tournament and disguise contributed, which looked forward to the development of the masque. Its own ancestor, the mumming, had predisposed it to accept the tournament disguise readily.

The custom of mumming had originally been associated with Christmas, when groups of men, visored or disguised, entered houses to play a silent game of dice. Its ancient origins are obscure, but it is probably related to the surviving New Year custom of "first-

footing".[19] To have men wandering at large, at night and in disguise, was clearly not to the liking of the authorities. In 1334, 1393 and 1405, the City of London issued edicts forbidding the practice of mumming.[20] And in 1418, no " disgisyng . . . with eny feynyd berdis, peyntid visers, diffourmyd or colourid visages in eny wise" were allowed.[21] It was widely held that the custom of disguise and of free entry were often used to cloak sedition. In 1400, partisans of Richard II were accused of an attempt to seize Henry IV in a mumming; Sir John Oldcastle and his Lollards were accused of a similar crime at Eltham; and in 1443 it was a mumming which developed into the famous Gladman Insurrection in Norwich.[22] Reference is made to dishonest mumming in Snatch's speech in the third scene of The Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom:

> **Where I lay last night , I stole away a sheete:**
> **We will take this, and tie it to his head**
> **And soe we will blind him;**
> **And, sirrah, I charge you, when you here any body coming**
> **If they aske you any question; say you go a-mumming.**
> **23**

For kings, nobleman and prominent citizens, however, the mumming was allowable. The Wardrobe Accounts of Edward II, for the tenth year of his reign (1337), note that a costume was made "To our Lord the King to play at dice on Christmas night".[24] Similar payments in the eleventh and fourteenth years show this expenditure to have been an annual custom. In 1377 the Commons of London performed a mumming for Richard II, with esquires, knights, a Pope and twenty-four cardinals, with eight or ten men in black visors seeming to be either devils or legates, or both.[25]

In contemporary descriptions, the terms "mumming" and

"disguising" appear to have become interchangeable, and no commentator[26] has satisfactorily distinguished between the two.[27] It is clear, from the examples quoted above, that the original Christmas custom observed by Edward II and his contemporaries, i.e. playing at dice in some kind of disguise, became a much more elaborate activity in 1509, and yet still kept the name "mumming". Moreover the "disguising", so named, had made its appearance already in the 1501 nuptial festivities of Arthur and Katharine.[28] Without very much more detailed accounts it is difficult to pinpoint the difference between the two forms of entertainment, if indeed they are always different. It can be said that after 1509 the term "mumming" becomes less frequently used, and the term "disguising" more so. It can also be taken that the latter grew out of the former at about the time that tournament disguise was incorporated with indoor festivities. The difference, therefore,may lie in the degree of design and composition which went into the performance; lavish costume, ingenious scenic effects, dialogue and singing, as well as masks and dancing, may constitute what is known as a disguising rather than a mumming.[29]

There seems also to have been a tradition of courtly dancing in masks or visors which existed separately from the Christmas mumming: and from this activity came the frequently-used terms "masking" and "maskers". It seems to have been associated specifically with dancing, and probably originated in Italy.[30] The first reference to it in Britain is the description of the marriage feast of Alexander III and Joleta, daughter of the Count of Dreux, in Scotland in 1285.[31] On this odd occasion the figure of Death, in the guise of a skeleton, joined a group of maskers

dancing before the King and Queen.

In England in 1519, there was a festival of maskers at Newhall, Essex, - this being consistently described in terms of the word "mask" throughout its account.[32] To begin with, eight maskers wearing long white beards danced with the ladies of the court, and "behaued theimselfes sadly". The Queen plucked off their visors and revealed some of the senior members of the court. Then entered two companies of six maskers, led by the King and the Earl of Devonshire, who danced and conducted themselves in the proper manner. Chambers thinks that the masking can be defined as a kind of simple mumming.[33] Certainly its distinguishing features seem to be only the wearing of visors and the performance of groups of dancers.

Whatever the relationship between mumming and masking, and those two and disguising, there is no doubt that with the migration of tournament disguise and spectacle to indoor entertainment, all the forms combined and came to be known, by the end of Henry VIII's reign, as the mask: Chambers notes that in the Elizabethan court all other terms became obsolete.[34]

The disguising, or the mask, repeated the history of the tournament with respect to the creation of characters and parts. Soon it was no longer enough to disguise the courtier as the questing knight of romance; he had to be seen to represent more universal qualities. Allegory began to find a place in the mask as it had done in the tournament.

Long before the tournament influenced the indoor entertainments

of the English court, and certainly before René d'Anjou's Pas d' Armes of 1449, there had been a courtly tradition of games and pastimes associated with love-allegory. W.A. Neilson writes:

> **The number of instances .... of the central conception of a court held by the God or Goddess of Love and attended by personifications of abstract qualities is so large as almost to justify the treatment of this class of allegory as a separate literary genre.**
>
> **35**

In France in the twelfth century, the débat d'amour and the concept of the Court of Love had flourished under the patronage of Marie de Champagne; and Andreas Capellanus is its witness. A Cour Amoureuse proper was founded in 1400 by Charles VI, the Dukes of Burgundy and Bourbon, and others of the nobility.[36] That the institution related later to pageant and other entertainments is indicated in the Feste du Prince de Plaisance at Valenciennes in 1348. There had been other pageantic allegories appearing on Mardi Gras and at other festivals in the larger towns of northern France in which the names of the members of the Cour Amoureuse are mentioned. At Valenciennes, there were two Princes d'Amour, one from Lille and the other from Tournay.[37]

In Italy there exists a record of a Court Of Love pageant from the Florentine Feast of St. John in 1283. The chronicler Giovanni Villani writes that the following was seen:

> **. . . una compagnia e brigate di mille uomini o piú, tutti vestiti di robe bianche con uno signore detto dell'Amore. Per la qual brigata non s'intendea se non in giuochi e in sollazzi e in balli di donne e di cavalieri e d'altri popolani, andando per la terra con trombe e diversi stromenti in gioia e allegrezza, e stando in conviti insieme, in desinari e in cene. La qual corte duró presso a due mesi, e fu la piú nobile e nominata che mai fosse nella cittá di Firenze o in Toscana.**
>
> **38**

On the Continent, then, love-allegory was already on its way to the masque via the pageant in the thirteenth century. In 1431 Paris greeted the English Henry VI as its king with a pageant of eighteen worthy virtues - "ix preux et ix preuses" - led by Fame, "une deesse".[39] Not to be outdone, London replied with a vast pageant at London Bridge for the king's return. The author and designer of this welcome was the monk, John Lydgate, whose affinity with allegory had already been marked in his poetical works.[40] It is noteworthy that Lydgate's pageant allegory featured moral virtues, not the virtues of love, and he was probably influenced by the increasingly popular Moral Interludes;[41] love-allegory was to flourish in courtly entertainment later in England. A brief description of the King's entry shows how a multitude of parts were created for this show, how a degree of stage "business" was devised, and how the recitation of speeches was prepared: it also indicates the overall attempt to impart a rational design and unity to the whole.

Near London Bridge three empresses issued from a tower hung with velvet, cloth of gold, silk and tapestries. As Nature, Grace and Virtue they bestowed upon the King the gifts of science and cunning, strength and beauty, prosperity and health. Then seven virgins came before him and wished him glory, clemency, pity, might, victory, prudence, faith, health, love and peace. At Cornhill there was a tabernacle for Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, Music, Arsmetric, Geometry and Astronomy, presided over by Dame Sapience. At the Conduit there was a child seated upon a throne with Mercy, Truth and Clemency standing beside.

At Cheapside, Mercy, Grace and Pity drew wine from the three wells of Temperance, Good Governance and Comfort and Consolation. Enoch and Elias then prayed for the King and blessed him. The King rode on to a castle surrounded with trees showing his descent from St. Edward and St. Louis of France, with one tree representing the Tree of Jesse. In this style the pageant continued.[42]

From this royal entry it is possible to detect some of the influences on Lydgate's work, apart from the immediate French one. Certainly tournaments of the Lady-of-the-Sun type of 1374 would have been known to him and may well have shown him the possibilities of allegorical displays. Wickham suggests that it was the tournament also whose heralds inspired the poet with the idea of a speaking Presenter to introduce the characters and to explain their significance. The minstrels, he thinks, supplied the idea of speaking actors.[43] In the years between 1427 and 1430 the poet had also been experimenting with the traditional mumming, and had given it a rudimentary text in the form of an explanatory Prologue in verse. Some of his compositions are billed as "the devyce of desguysing", but some are played "in wyse of mommers desguysed". This again suggests a stage of development from one to the other in which, as has already been seen, there was no definite separation. All these, like the royal entry of Henry VI, contained moral allegory.

The poet's most developed composition was probably The Mumming at Hertford in which three disguised figures speak

in turn, and a judgement is called for from the audience.[44] In this mumming considerable scenic effects were required to demonstrate the allegory, reminiscent of the devices employed in the tournament spectacles.

In Lydgate's work, then, is a positive link between the visored mumming and the disguising which incorporates influences from the tournament. This poet also connects allegory with disguise, although he moves away from the development of the tournament from romance disguise to love-allegory, and from a similar Continental trend in royal entry and pageant, and invests his work with great moral weight and dignity.

Lydgate's influence, however, did not limit dramatic allegory to one branch of development. The poet died in about 1451, and there followed a period of civil upheaval and political repression during which there is little record of court mummings or disguisings. When these entertainments re-surfaced in Henry VIII's reign, allegory forms a strong component, but it is of a mixed character. On the one hand can be found the weighty matters of morals and politics, such as are found in the Windsor disguising of 1522:

> **. . . . in the great halle was a disguisyng or play, theffect thereof was that there was a proud horse which would not be tamed nor brideled, but amitie sent prudence and pollicie which tamed him, and force and puyssance brideled him. This horse was ment by the Frenche kyng, and amitie by the king of England and themperor, and the other prisoners were their counsail and power, . . .**
>
> **45**

John Roo composed a similar "goodly disguisyng" at Gray's Inn in 1526, adding to the allegory such costume and dancing as

to be worthy of remark:

> **. . . theffecte of the plaie was, that lord governaunce was ruled by dissipacioun and negligence, by whose misgoveraunce and evil order lady Publike wele was put from governaunce: . . . This plaie was so set furth with riche and costly apparell, with straunge divises of Maskes and morrishes, . . .**
>
> **46**

On the other hand, though, in the same year as the Windsor disguising, Wolsey's entertainment for the King and his ambassadors included the, by now very familiar, love-allegory featuring Beautie, Honor and Perseverance, Disdain, Daungier and Gealousie, Attendaunce, Loyaltie and Libertie. There is evidence from Hall that in this king's reign (probably because of Henry's strong personal influence on court entertainment) love-allegory flourished anew beside its younger moral cousin, and provided yet more material to thrust towards the multiform spectacle of the masque.

Disguise had found its way into the tournament and tournament shows, into the disguising and the mask, and had allied itself with the mumming and dramatic allegory. Drawn gradually and sporadically into all these dramatic forms were costumes replacing and augmenting disguises, scenic effects and mechanical devices, music, dancing and singing. All these medieval and early Renaissance arts of entertainment were eventually combined and co-ordinated in the immediate predecessor of the masque; this was chiefly the work of one man, William Cornish.

As Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal, Cornish was principally the King's Musician. By 1502, however, he had

come to the fore as the deviser of complex courtly entertainments.[47] No texts of Cornish's productions remain, but the Vitellius manuscript account of the 1501 Westminster Wedding disguising gives some notion of the ambitious use of everything available to him which seems to have been Cornish's personal mark.[48] This disguising was "convayed and showed in pageants proper and subtile", which included a castle bearing singing choristers and eight disguised ladies - one of them appearing as the bride, Katharine of Aragon, herself. Then came a ship bearing two ambassadors, Hope and Desire; and this was followed by a Mount of Love from which issued eight knights who staged an "assault" on the castle. All this was "set fourth by countenance, speeches and demeanour". At the end the disguisers danced together, and then "voided" in order that the dancing of the members of the court should begin.

From this point on, the masque, as it was soon to be known to the court, could only develop through greater elaboration upon a theme which Cornish had already devised. The entertainment for the French Ambassadors, designed by Cornish's successor William Crane in 1527, was probably the acme of Tudor courtly spectacle, and was clearly indebted to Cornish's earlier work. The remarkable feature which emerges from Hall's account of the event is a closeness to the original romance sentiment and themes which remains, at this late date, in the lavish and ingenious art of the masque.

The entertainment began with a speech about the concord existing between England and France. Then eight choristers entered singing and accompanying two richly-dressed figures who subsequently debated the relative merits of riches and love. Reaching no agreement, they each summoned three knights who jousted at a

golden barrier which was lowered from an arch at the centre of the hall. Still lacking a conclusion, the knights withdrew and there entered an ancient, silver-bearded man who proclaimed that a prince is obeyed and served through love, and rewards his lovers and friends properly with riches. With this, a mountain appeared at one end of the hall; it was studded with precious stones and planted with roses and pomegranates. From thence eight richly-dressed lords descended, taking partners from the audience, and danced. Then the Princess Mary and seven of her ladies issued from a cave and danced with the eight lords. They were joined by six visored persons in silver and black garments, "after the fashion of Iceland", wearing long beards "so that they were not known". They, too, took partners from the audience and danced with great energy. The King then entered gorgeously with seven lords in Venetian dress, their faces visored with beards of gold. Whereupon the minstrelsy began and these eight danced with the ladies of the court. The Queen then plucked off the King's visor, the ladies did likewise to their lords, and all were revealed.[49]

This multiform spectacle was the summit of the achievements and traditions of all the courtly entertainments that had gone before. Drawing upon the tournament and upon the indoor traditions of mumming, masking and disguising, the masque made use of more recently acquired dramatic elements such as allegory, originally established in England over a hundred years before by John Lydgate, choral accompaniment, probably William Cornish's special contribution, and the débat of the Courts of Love. One of the oldest influences, the romance, was still carried within this complex

form, present in the trial by combat, and the cave and mountain scenery. The disguise theme of the romances was also still present, undeniably combined with the tradition of masked dances and seasonal celebrations, but nevertheless there, partly in its own right, as transferred along with the romance scenery and the vestigial remains of romance plot by the shows of the tournament.

Conclusion.

The disguise theme was clearly one of the most popular elements of romance which were incorporated into the changing spectacle of the tournament. Examples of its use are recorded in Europe as early as 1225, and in England as late as 1526. The very theatricality of disguised combat and of plots from the romances involving disguise, which were inserted into the tournament, contributed to the increasingly dramatic form which indoor courtly entertainments in England were to take. Feasting and dancing had earlier been associated with masking, particularly at Christmas, but it is no coincidence that, with the movement of the tournament shows to the hall, and the strength of the romance influence remaining very great, the entertainment known as the disguising began to flourish. Disguise by this time extended from the original participants of the tourney to all willing members of the court. By the beginning of the sixteenth century the complex form of the masque had developed. The manifold arts which contributed to this form have already been listed. Amongst them disguise is found transformed in a double rôle. The disguised king or knight who jousts valiantly and then reveals his identity to watching spectators now becomes the courtier who dances and

enacts a scene, and then unmasks, or is unmasked, at an appointed time. The other descendent of the disguised knight, the courtier who jousts as "Bon espoir" or "Valiaunt desire", is now the actor in an allegorical drama who personifies "Pollicie" or "Amitie". Both these contributors to the masque have their beginnings in the disguise of romance.

Politically, there is no doubt that the romances, particularly those of the Arthurian cycle, were exploited by the kings to gain personal popularity and authority, and national prestige and unity; and imitations of romances, including disguise plots, were used to this end as early as 1252, and possibly as late as the early years of Henry VIII's reign. At the same time the violent and divisive nature of the tournament was tempered, again in part by the incorporation of romance themes and images into the contest. Games of identity and of "dressing-up", in which the most powerful members of the court and the nobility participated, echoed the disguises of romance; and these continued into the early sixteenth century.

From this the popularity of the romances and of one of their favourite themes cannot be doubted. Nor can the continuation of this approval and enthusiasm well into the Renaissance be denied. That romance was still a living, renewable and influential genre is evidenced by the fact that its themes could be used politically, socially, and artistically to produce a new dramatic form, instead of being relegated to nostalgic remembrance.

CHAPTER 7

SOME INFLUENCES OF THE DISGUISE THEME ON TUDOR DRAMA

It has been seen in the previous chapter that romance disguise themes were strongly influential in the pageantic development of the tournament, and in the theatrical development of the courtly disguisings and the masque.

At the same time records give evidence that the medieval romances were surviving, apart from these fields of courtly entertainment, in dramatised versions, such as that of Guy of Warwick, Robert of Sicily, and what are known as the Placidas plays, well into the seventeenth century. The printed versions of the romances, such as those produced by Caxton and de Worde, were popular enough to arouse the antagonism of scholars and moralists. Printed romances enjoyed a special vogue until about 1575. The force of the influence of the medieval romances, then, was formidable and did not fade when original composition began to cease.

At roughly the same time as the emergence of sophisticated courtly entertainments carrying romance, and romance disguise, themes, there developed the dramatic genre known as the Moral Interlude. This was a secular form of drama of which many complete texts are available, which show strong romance influence in imagery, themes and narrative framework. The disguise themes of romance, which had so well partnered the love-allegory of the courtly field and indoor entertainments, can be seen to be accomm-

odated also in the moral allegory of the interludes. Examination of interlude texts attempts to show the influence of the techniques of the romancers in their use of the disguise theme in the pretence of vices as virtues, in the symbolical use of garments of penance and grace, in disguise in order to dupe, to gain access and entry, in the dramatic use of the un-masking of the disguised person and, finally, in the techniques of comic disguise.

a) The Survival of Romance in Late Plantagenet and Tudor Drama and Literature.

Long before the rise of romantic drama in Elizabeth's reign, the popularity of the English romance was vigorously alive from the end of the medieval period into the Renaissance. General evidence for this lies in the recorded hostilities of the humanists and the men of letters, from 1520 onwards, towards the publication of romance narratives, and towards secular drama, including those plays which were based upon the romances. Particular evidence for the continuing vogue for romance is also available. Court disguisings and settings for the tilt were strongly influenced by all kinds of romance themes, particularly in the years of Henry VIII's youth, at the beginning of the sixteenth century; the publication of English, and the translation of Continental, romances is recorded from 1475 (by Caxton) until the end of the sixteenth century; and productions of romantic plays are mentioned as early as 1444, continuing strongly in the fifteen-nineties and on into the seventeenth century. The continuing influence of the romances in early English secular drama forms a parallel with the development of the Moral Interlude from approximately

1400 onwards.

As was the case in the development of the tournament, some measure of the popularity of public recitations or dramatised performances of the romances, and of the strength and increase of romance influence amongst other kinds of printed and published literature, can be seen in the origins and frequency of the censure to which the genre was subjected during the English Renaissance. The impulse to a strong current of criticism which began at this time was given primarily by the humanists, Erasmus and Juan Luis Vives.

Contemporary and earlier songs and poems had hinted at the degenerate custom of attendance at secular plays. The author of the following verse views it as part of the general decline in England:

> **Inglond goith to nought, plus fecit homo viciosus;**
> **To lust man is broughth, nimis est homo deliciosus.**
> **Goddis halydays non observantur honeste,**
> **For unthryfty pleyis in eis regnant manifeste.**
> [1]

The humanists had specific objections to secular literature. Erasmus criticised the stories of Arthur and Lancelot on the grounds that they distracted students from their classical studies; he named such stories "fabulae stultae et aniles".[2] Vives is more insistent. In his De Officio Mariti of 1523, under a section entitled De Disciplina Feminae, he includes a list of romances forbidden to the Christian reader: this work was expanded in 1540 to include English romances such as the stories of Parthonope, Generydes, Ipomedon, Lybeaus Desconus, Arthur, Guy and Bevis. In the following passage from Thomas Paynell's translation of 1546, he argues that such literature brings men to sin:

> **There be some kind of letters & writynges that pertayne only to adourne & increase eloquence withall. Some to delite and please. Some that make a man subtile and craftye . . . . . manye other whiche are written in the vulgar tonge, as of Trystram, Lancelot, Ogier, Amasus and of Arthur the whiche were written and made by suche as were ydle & knew nothinge. These bokes do hurte both man and woman, for they make them wylye & craftye, they kyndle and styr up covetousnes, inflame angre, & all beastly filthy desyre.**
>
> 3

This conception of the romances which were commonly read at the time passed from Erasmus and Vives into the works of the Protestant moralists and commentators on education. Roger Ascham's Toxophilus of 1545 attacked "bookes of fayned chevalrie" which led men to "manslaughter and baudrye". In 1570 he returned to the attack in The Scholemaster, linking the romances with religious decadence:

> **In our forefathers tyme whan Papistrie, as a standyng poole, covered and overflowed all England . . . fewe bookes were read in our tong, sauyng certaine bookes Cheualrie, ... which, as some may say, were made in Monasteries, by idle Monkes or wanton Channons: as one for example, Morte Arthure.**
>
> 4

Two years later, Edward Dering, a clergyman leaning towards Puritanism, echoed this theme in his Preface to Bryefe and Necessary Catechisme or instruction. The degraded taste of his contemporaries for sinful and abominable literature, he said, was like the wickedness of their forefathers, who

> **. . . . had their spiritual echauntementes, in which they were bewytched, Bevis of Hampton, Guy of Warwike, Arthur of the round table, Huon of Burdeaux, Oliver of the Castle, the foure sonnes of Amond, . . . These were in the former daies subtile sleightes of Satan to occupye Christian wyts in Heathen fansies.**
>
> 5

In the next decade, criticism of the romances was to focus upon literary, as well as moral short-comings. Both Sidney and

Gosson condemned romantic plays as simple and repetitive. Sidney summarised the formula for a popular play, in his Defence of Poesie (1580), thus. The scene should be in Asia, Africa, or other "under-kingdom"; ladies should gather flowers in a garden; a ship must be wrecked on a rock; a hideous monster appears from a cave; armies give battle, and "two young princes fall in love; after many traverses she is got with child, delivered of a fair boy, he is lost, groweth a man, falleth in love," - and so forth.[6] Gosson, in Playes Confuted in fiue Actions (c.1582), being paid by the city authorities to be so, is more vehement in his criticism of the stage:

> **I may boldely say it because I haue seene it, that the Palace of pleasure, the Golden Asse, the Aethiopian historie, Armadis of Fraunce, the Rounde table, baudie Comedies in Latine, French, Italian and Spanish, haue been throughly ransackt to furnish the Playe houses in London.**
>
> **7**

Coming closer to the romances, he complains:

> **Sometime you shall see nothing but the aduentures of an amorous knight, passing from countrie to countrie for the loue of his lady, encountring many a terrible monster made of broune paper, & at his retorne, is so wonderfully changed, that he can not be knowne but by some posie in a tablet, or by a broken ring, or a handkircher, or a piece of cockle shell.**
>
> **8**

Montaigne, at about the same time (first book of essays, 1580), thought the stories of King Arthur, Lancelot, Amadis and Huon of Bordeaux "idle, time-consuming and wit-besotting trash of bookes wherein youth doth commonly ammuse it self";[9] and in 1598 criticism is still strong (and romances still, presumably, popular) when Francis Meres compiled a list of books to be censured: "Beuis of Hampton, Guy of Warwicke, Arthur of the Round Table, Huon of Bordeaux, Oliver of the Castle, The Foure

Sonnes of Aymon, . . ." - the offending names are familiar.[10]

Putenham, without venting criticism, suggests in his Arte of English Poesie (1589), that the reciting or the singing of the romances by minstrels still survived in his time. He writes of:

> **Ballads and small popular musickes sung by these contrabanqui upon benches and barrels heads . . . and their matters being for the most part stories of old time, as the tale of Sir Topas, Bevis of Southampton, Guy of Warwick, Adam Bell and Clymme of the Clough, and such other old romances or historical rhimes . . .**
>
> [11]

From these contemporary comments several points about the survival of the romances are clear. There is no doubt that, at least until the end of the sixteenth century, the popularity of the genre was great enough to arouse the opposition of serious and thoughtful men. That minstrel recitation and musical performance of the romances were still taking place can also be accepted as fact. Added to this is the evidence that romances were also being read privately, to a large extent, and that romance dramas, whatever their quality, formed attractive competition against the moral and religious plays of the time, entertaining not only the halls of the nobility, but the playhouses of London as well. Specific evidence gives some idea of the romances and themes which kept their appeal and influence well into the Renaissance.

At court, it has already been seen that the monarchy in the sixteenth century greatly favoured themes of romance, particularly those of disguise, which enhanced the shows of the tournament and which transferred easily to indoor festivities and entertainments. In the first quarter of that century a spate of disguisings

and tilts were held taking as their themes general romance images and motifs. In 1510, 1511 , in May 1513 and June in the same year, and in 1522, settings for tilts were respectively given the titles The Four Chevaliers of the Forest Salvigny, The Castle Dangerous, The Tilt of the Hermits, The Dolorous Castle and the Conquest of Lady Scorn.[12] Disguisings in 1511, 1513, two in 1515, and one each in 1517 and 1518 were also based on romances; they were, respectively, The Garden of Pleasure, A Rich Mount, the Place Perilous, the Eltham Pageant of a Castle, The Garden of Esperance, possibly designed by Cornish, and A Mask of Palmers.[13] Baskerville also notes that, as late as 1555, garments were provided for "Robard the Devil" in the jousts at Guisnes.[14] In the second quarter of the sixteenth century a decrease in tournament spectacles and disguisings at court is matched by an increase in the performance of plays proper, particularly Moral Interludes.[15] Yet the entertainments of the court, especially under Henry VIII, had been for thirty years strongly instrumental in carrying forward the popularity of the medieval romances into the late Tudor era.

Some, albeit rare, evidence suggests that romances were being performed as drama, rather than being recited, as early as the middle of the fifteenth century. Robert Bale's chronicle, which covers the sixteenth to the thirty-eighth years of Henry VI's reign (1437-1460), contains the following notes for the year 1444:

> **Item this yer at seint albans the last of Juyn a play of Eglemour and Degrebelle.**
>
> **Item the moneth of August was a play at Bermondsey of a knight cleped fflorence.**
>
> **16**

Flenley suggests that the first is a play of Sir Eglamour of Artois, the second being probably Floris and Blanchfleur. Baskervill thinks that it might alternatively be a drama based on Octavian or The Tale of Florent from the Confessio Amantis.[17] On the nature of the performance, Flenley observes that there are no other contemporary records of the "playing" of these romances and that, strictly speaking, the performances were not plays, as such. Baskervill suggests that the plays could have been dramatic recitals, comparing them to the performance in Scotland in 1497 when "twa fithelaris . . . sang Gray Steil" to the king.[18] He thinks it more likely, though, that they were akin to processions or pageants, with a Presenter reciting speeches which gave some semblance of the dramatic to the performances. Whatever the exact form, there is no doubt that early in the history of English drama romance material was being used for secular entertainments for the public at large.

Two other brief records also suggest that dramas, however primitive, were enacted from the romances. The chronicle for the City of Chester, for the year 1529, notes the performance of Kinge Robert of Scissilie at the High Cross in the city. This dramatisation is named an "interlude".[19] Baskervill also notes The Play of Placidas enacted at Braintree in 1534, and observes the popularity of the Eustace legend and its derivative romances in the sixteenth century.[20]

The development of the romance drama continued beyond the reign of Henry VIII. The last thirty years of the sixteenth century, those years after Mary's religious repression, saw an

upsurge in the production of plays derived from the romances. In 1576, Common Conditions, an anonymous play, was produced - a curious dramatic hybrid of moral allegory and romance reminiscent of some of the tournament spectacles. It told the story of Sedmond and Clarissa, the children of a fugitive courtier Galiarbus. Escaping with their faithful servant, Common Conditions, and their double-dealing attendant, Vice, they are caught up in an involved plot of love and adventure. They are waylaid and Clarissa is bound to a tree, but later rescued by Common Conditions; a maid, Sabia, falls in love with "Nomides" (the disguised Sedmond); Sedmond falls in love with "Metrea" (the disguised Clarissa); and Clarissa ultimately shares with her lover, Lamphedon, a death arising from the unwelcome attentions of the prince Leostines. The source of this romance plot is not certain, but Brooke suggests many parallels between the English drama and the Italian romance, L'Amor Costante (probably 1536).[21] Nevertheless, the play is remarkable in that it shows romance claiming an equal share of the drama with the traditions of the Moral Interludes.

The second romance-type drama of this period on which detailed information is available is The Historie of the two valiant knights, Sir Clyomon knight of the Golden Sheeld, sonne to the King of Denmarke: And Clamydes the white knight, sonne to the King of Suauia, printed in 1599. This drama contained no allegory, but addressed itself directly to a tale of chivalric rivalry between the title figures who travel far afield on deeds of valour. The close of the play is reached as they come together in a tournament in the Kingdom of the Strange Marshes, and are reconciled by King Alexander.[22]

Of the host of dramas enacted or produced between 1570 and 1661, which show that romance was far from dead at the end of the Middle Ages, little is known save that they existed and were performed. Between 1570 and 1580, five plays were produced at court deriving from the romances. They were the lost Paris and Vienne, performed in 1571 or 1572; The Irish Knight, performed in 1576 or 1577, lost, but probably a version of the French Meliadus; The Historie of the Solitarie Knight, performed in 1577, now lost; The Rape of the Second Helen, probably based on the French Amadis, and performed in 1578 or 1579; and The Knight of the Burning Rock, performed in 1579, now lost. In the 1590's and later, Philip Henslowe bought, or drew revenue from, six highly popular pieces treating themes of medieval romance; Huon of Bordeaux, (1593-4), The Enterlude of Valentyne, (1595), Uther Pendragon, (1597), Valentine and Orson, (1598), The Life and Death of King Arthur, (1598), Tristram of Lyons, (1598) and The Four Sons of Aymon, (1603 and 1624).[23] Richmond notes that Guy of Warwick was still being popularly received as a drama between 1618 and 1639, and in 1661.[24]

The strength of the medieval romance as a dramatic influence, therefore, was formidable and did not die. There is no doubt that the tradition of romance drama, beginning with the recitations and musical performances of the medieval minstrels, was carried forward through the Tudor period and was available as material for the romantic plays of the Elizabethan period of high drama and beyond.

At the same time, the widespread popularity of the romances

was being reflected in the general private reading of a public now supplied and encouraged by the advent of printing. At the end of the fifteenth century there was a vast output of low-priced chap-books and ballads containing the adventures of the Arthurian heroes, Bevis and Guy. And such was the interest in romance, a new stock of chivalric narratives was added to the native collection, imported mainly from France and Spain. Lord Berners translated the popular Huon of Bordeaux from the French, and Anthony Munday translated Amadis of Gaul.[25] This taste for romance of whatever origin is reflected in the heterogeneous lists of romance dramas, of English and non-English origin, performed in the sixteenth century.

When Caxton printed his first batch of romances between 1475 and 1491, only Malory's Morte Darthur could truly be said to be English; the seven other romances were mainly French imports.[26] Between 1491 and 1535, however, Wynkyn de Worde had added Robert the Devil and William of Palerne amongst five other romances. It is probable, though not certain, that he also printed at this time Sir Bevis, Sir Degaré, Sir Eglamour, Guy, Robert the Devil Ipomydon, Richard, The Squire of Low Degree, Generydes, Sir Isumbras, Sir Triamour and Torrent of Portyngale.[27] Between 1495 and 1530, Richard Pynson of London printed Guy, Bevis, The Jeast of Sir Gawayne, Arthur of Little Britain and the French Paris and Vienne. In about 1498 an itinerant bookseller, John Russhe, bought twenty bound copies of Bevis from Pynson at 10d. each: and in 1520 John Dorne of Oxford was selling Sir Eglamour and Robert the Devil for 3d. each, and Sir Isumbras at 2d..

William Copland printed Sir Degaré, Sir Eglamour, Sir Isumbras, The Squire of Low Degree, Bevis, Guy and Sir Triamour between 1548 and 1569. John King also printed Sir Degaré and The Squire in 1560, having taken out licences for The Jeast of Sir Gawayn and Sir Lanwell in 1557 or 1558. Licences for Bevis were taken out by the printers Thomas Marsh, John Tysdale and John Alde between 1558 and 1569. John Purfoot obtained licences for Richard and Generydes in 1568 and 1569. John Cawood issued Guy at some date before 1572, and John Walley issued, at an unknown date within the period, the romance of Sir Eglamour.[28]

After about 1575, the metrical romances, with one or two exceptions, disappeared for the possible reason that the vogue for romance had found new ground, as has already been seen, in the dramas of the 1570's, the 1580's and the 1590's. There is sufficient evidence to suggest, though, that although the fifteenth century may have seen the end of the composition of these works, it did not witness the death of their appeal and popularity; the expensive production of volumes of romances, it is clear, found an adequate return for nearly a hundred years. Imported romances from the Continent, welcomed in a general enthusiasm for the genre, formed strong competition for the English works from the beginning of the printing era. From about 1500 onwards, however, the native compositions more than held their own, the most frequently-mentioned in such records as we have being the Eustace-related romances and the stories of Guy and Bevis: Guy of Warwick, indeed, seems to have been the most popular and long-lived in commercial terms, both in print and on the stage, of all of them.

Romance in general, then, enjoyed both popularity and notoriety amongst the general public, men of letters, and at court from the middle of the fifteenth century, so far as is known, into the Elizabethan era, and beyond that. There was a commercial market for mass sales of printed romances during most of this period, and popular support for a secular theatre of romance, both in the London playhouses and at smaller provincial centres. All this, however, though it suggests a strength within the genre beyond the highest period of composition, does not confirm any influence on other branches of writing at the time. Nor is it evidence, although the names of romances carrying strong themes of disguise recur frequently in the lists of printed and dramatised works, of romance disguise being particularly influential. The next section looks at the Moral Interludes to determine whether such influence existed outside the romance genre beyond the medieval period, and whether the disguise theme was a contributor to that influence.

b) The Influence of the Romances and the Disguise Theme on the Moral Interludes.

The Moral Interlude is possibly the most unlikely place in which to look for romance influence and traces of the disguise theme. In literary terms, church influence and the techniques of the pulpit, with its large capacity for moral allegory, would seem to have had the greatest share in shaping this dramatic form; as has been noted already, moralists and the religious were uneasy about the effect of the romances on the Christian spirit. Chronologically, moreover, the strongest period in the life of

the Moral Interludes corresponds almost exactly with the period of the most intense religious awareness in England, amongst the Protestants, and particularly amongst the Marian Catholics: the resurgence of romance drama began in about 1570, in a more relaxed religious atmosphere under the mature Elizabeth, when the interludes were beginning to be performed less frequently. There would appear to be not only little opportunity, therefore, for the romances to exert an influence in this direction, but positive deterrents set against their doing so. Nevertheless, like the continuing influence of the romances, the interludes were carried out of the late medieval period into the Renaissance, and during their development the popularity of printed and dramatised stories of chivalric heroes was growing. The interludes also form a dramatic link with the Elizabethan period of high drama in which the disguise theme finds an important rôle.

With the texts available, it is possible to find in the Moral Interludes evidence of general romance influence, directly in the knight, and the quest and wooing, images, and indirectly, through the borrowing of tournament and castle-assault themes. There are also examples of romance/interlude hybrids, like Common Conditions which is already referred to in this chapter, which, neither wholly one thing nor the other, seem to suggest that the two genres were more closely related than is usually supposed. General instances of disguise occur in several interludes, usually for the purpose of deception, and sometimes in a comic rôle akin to that of the romances. The theme figures largest of all, however, in two of the central concerns of the moral plays, - in the changing and changeable nature of Man,

and the appearing of vice as virtue. The manner in which these concepts were made concrete on the Tudor stage, as witnessed by the texts themselves, argues a relationship with romance disguise.

A debt to romance can be seen in the use of the knight-image in the Moral Interludes. This use is not always serious, - being in one instance an element of parody, - and is not always morally approving; but it is nevertheless a borrowed romance image which is to be found in these plays as early as the middle of the fourteenth century.

This is the approximate date which Happé affixes to The Pride of Life,[1] a story of the heedlessness of pride told in terms of kingly power, knightly combat and the receiving of a death-giving wound. Prologus opens the play by describing the protagonists, and explaining the action to come:

> **He hath a lady lovelich all at likinge**
> **ne may he of no mirth mene ne misse;**
> **he seith in swetnisse he wol set his likinge**
> **and bringe his bale boun in-to blisse.**
> **(11.29 ff.) 2**

At his command are doughty knights:

> **Knyghtis he hath cumlich**
> **in bred and in leinth;**
> **not i nevir non such**
> **of statey ne of strynth.**
> **(11.33 ff.) 3**

Heedless of his own death to come, Rex Vivus disregards the warnings of his wife and sends home his bishop. Whereupon Death, not fearing the might of the knights, Fortitudo and Sanitas, comes to claim the king from Life. A battle ensues

in which Life receives a deadly blow. The issue is decided and the soul of Rex Vivus is taken by friends, leaving the figure of Our Lady praying.

Clearly, the chivalric power and glory of Rex Vivus is significant of earthly pride and transience, and is not a compliment to the heroes of romance. This theme, disapproving in tone, is taken up again later in the play of Mundus et Infans, written between 1508 and 1522.[4] In this interlude, Infans is actually dubbed a knight, when he reaches maturity, by Mundus who names him "Manhood Mighty" and enjoins him to espouse chivalry and bravery in battle:

> **Now Manhood I will array thee new**
> **In robes royal right of good hue,**
> **And I pray thee principally be true**
> **And here I dub thee a knight,**
> **And haunt alway to chivalry.**
>
> **(11.195 ff.)** [5]
>
> . . . . . .
>
> **Farewell, Manhood, my gentle knight,**
> **Farewell my son, seemly in sight,**
> **I give thee a sword and also strength and might**
> **In battle boldly to bear thee well.**
>
> **(11.207 ff.)**

Manhood purposes to seek fame in adventure:

> **Now I am dubbed a knight hende**
> **Wonder wide shal wax my fame,**
> **To seek adventures now will I wend,**
> **To please the World in glee and game.**
>
> **(11.211 ff.)**

Later he boasts of his knightly deeds. His vaunt is less than chivalrous:

> **I have done harm on heads and knights have I killed**
> **And many a lady for my love hath said "Alas",**
> **Brigand Ernys I have beaten to back and to bones**
> **And beaten also many a groom to ground.**
>
> **(11.255 ff.)**

At this point in Mundus' moral life there enters Conscience, a sharply-focussed version of the lady and the bishop in The Pride of Life. Warning him of pride, Conscience invites Mundus to recall the fate of Robert of Sicily:

> **How he, for pride, in great poverty fell**
> **For he would not Conscience know.**
>
> **(11.349 f.)**

Conscience reminds him of the conduct befitting a true knight:

> **Ye must, Manhood, with all your might**
> **Maintain Holy Church's right,**
> **For this longeth to a knight**
> **Plainly in every place.**
>
> **(11.443 ff.)**

There are echoes here of another loan from romance which found its way into allegory, - the allegory of sermon literature and the religious lyric. For in his reformed knighthood, Mundus resembles less the incorrigible and worldly Rex Vivus than the Christ-knight of the story of Damassenus in the Gesta Romanorum, of Piers Plowman and of the Ancren Riwle.[6] In the last-named work of the twelfth century, Christ is depicted as a mighty king come to rescue a lady set about with foes, and prepared to receive the wounds of death so that she might love him. In a following passage He is seen as the knight at tourney. The appeal of the Christ-knight for the love of the soul is shown as analogous to the efforts of the knight to be deserving of his lady's love:

> **(He) schawde þurh cnihtschipe þet he wes luve wurð as weren sumwhile cnihtes iwunet to donne.**
>
> **7**

The warrior-image of Christ has a long literary history stretching back at least as far as The Dream of the Rood, and recurring in lyrics familiar to the thirteenth and fourteenth

centuries which depicted Christ as riding upon the cross. Such a lyric is one from which the following extract is taken:

> **Biheld mi side,**
> **mi wundes sprede so wide,**
> **Restless i ride.**
> **. . . . . .**
>
> **Mi palefrey is of tre,**
> **wiht nayles naylede 3wrh me.**

8

The Ancren Riwle, though, is the earliest text of which we know to use the romance knight allegory in connection with Christ. Others followed it, like the story of Damassenus from the Gesta Romanorum.

This work comprises a group of tales used didactically to point up the religious moral. Damassenus has a theme, not dissimilar from that of the Ancren Riwle, of a knight battling in a forest with a predatory adversary for the virtue of an innocent woman. The fourteenth century Reduccio interprets the meaning thus:

> **This/woman þat was þis Rauesched & lede in-to þe foreste;/ffor sothe is mannys sowle: . . . This worthy kny3te our/lorde Ihesu criste come doun fro heven; In-to þis wylde/foreste; That is to say. In-to þis world; And gave ba/tell with þis tyrante. That is to Say. with þe devell and/bothe þei were greuously woundyd; That is to say/Cryste in his flesche. The devell in his lordeschippe; . . .**

9

From the point of view of romance disguise themes, perhaps the most interesting of all the examples of Christ-knight imagery is that contained in an Old French poem found in Cotton M.S. Julius A.v,[10] which sets forth the allegory of the king willing to fight for the return of his abducted lady:

> **But his name was so renowned for prowess that the tyrant feared him, wherefor he would never have met him on the field, had the king displayed his own arms.**

> **But the brave knight managed cunningly, taking the arms of one of his bachelors, who was named Adam, and . . . . caused himself to be armed with them by a maiden.**
>
> 11

The arms with which the maiden clothes him are the flesh and blood and bones of the mortal frame. The bearings of his own armour are worn beneath:

> **When the foreign coat of the disguised knight was thus torn (by the adversary Belial), then was the king beneath well armed in his own armour, which was thus devised: Entirely quartered with joy and with life; fretted with power and knowledge and righteousness; in chief a fillet of high dignity; a bend of immortality.**
>
> 12

This matches closely with the fourteenth-century description of Christ in Piers Plowman, jousting in disguise, as Piers, so that no man may know him:

> **Pis ihesus of his gentrice wole iuste in piers armes,**
> **In his helme & in his haberioun humana natura.**
> **Pat cryst by nou3t biknowe here for consummatus deus,**
> **In Piers paltok þe plowman þis priker shal ryde;**
> **For no dynte shal him dere as in deitate patris.**
>
> 13

With such a long and distinguished tradition of knight, and disguised-knight, images borrowed from romance by religious allegory, it is not surprising to find the moral dramas of the early sixteenth century re-working the old loan. In Mundus et Infans the echo from these traditions is weak; nevertheless, the concept of the individual standing in a chivalric relationship to his Faith in there to be found at a time, moreover, when humanist criticisms of romance were beginning to be strongly voiced. Interesting also, though possibly coincidental, is the double link with the Gesta Romanorum which includes the Damassenus story and one of the sources of the romance of Robert

of Sicily to which Conscience points as an exemplum.[14]

It is likely that a marriage between the remnant Christ-knight image and the allegorical pageants of the tournament produced the moral drama of Wit and Science, written between 1539 and 1547, — a tale in which Wit, the son of Nature, in seeking a union with Science, the daughter of Reason and Experience, takes up and plays to a conclusion the rôle of the knight-suitor of romance. The allegorical figures of religious doctrine are gone, and in their place are the qualities properly belonging to learning. The structure of the play can be compared with that of Damassenus and with Bozon's romance allegory in being taken wholly from romance.

Reason, Science's father, agrees conditionally to Wit's suit; Wit must first, however, journey to Mount Parnassus to overcome the monster Tediousness; to accompany him Reason appoints an advisor, Instruction. Wit should carry with him a token given by Science, Instruction suggests:

> **WYT:** What weapon of Science shuld I have?
> **INSTRUCCION:** Such as all lovers of ther looves crave,
> A token from Ladye Science, wherbye
> Hope of her favor may spryng, and therbye
> Comforte, whych is the wepon, dowteles,
> That must serve youe agaynst Tedyousnes.
> (11.91 ff.) 15

Again, there are reminiscences here of the armour of Adam and the device of joy and life in Bozon's allegory, translated into the moral from the religious context.

Upon the encounter with Tediousness, the stage direction advises, "Tedyousnes cumth in with a vyser over hys hed." (1.140),

but gives no description other than this hint of disguised combat.[16] The verse shortens to a two-foot line to give a swaggering rhythm to the monster's speech; and upon striking Wit to the ground, Tediousness exults in Saracen style, calling upon "Mahowndes bones" (l.213) and "Mahowndes nose" (l.215) as witnesses to his deed.

Wit is apparently dead; but Honest Recreation sings a song to revive him, and the knight's adventures are resumed. He is next assayed by the adversaries of learning, Idleness and Ignorance, who contrive to disguise the knight while he lies sleeping. Idleness blackens Wit's face and makes the exchange of clothing familiar in romance. To Ignorance she gives Wit's gift from Science, and upon Wit she places the fool's dress of Ignorance:

> **IDELLNESS: Sciens garment on Ignorans back!**
> **(To Wit)But now letes se, syr, what do ye lak?**
> **No-thyng but evin to bukell heere this throte,**
> **So well this Wyt becumthe a fooles cote.**
> **(ll.579 ff.)**

Unaware of his own appearance, Wit comes to Science and her mother, Experience, and demands that he be treated in a loving manner:

> **WYT: But I am your owne deere lover, Wytt,**
> **That hath long lovd you, and lovth you yet.**
> **(ll.727 ff.)**

The women scorn him as "fowle, dysplesant, and uglye", and depart (l.778). Wit's sees himself in Reason's glass and cries: "Goges sawle, a foole! A foole, by the mas!" (l.807). This moral revelation forms the turning point in the drama. Reason comes in with Shame to beat Wit, but forgives him upon his promise to marry Science; and Instruction is directed to give him "new aparell" (l.879). Wit then takes Science's sword, Comfort, and slays

Tediousness as the monster is about to pursue Study and Diligence. Stage directions then ensure that Wit shall re-enter as befits a victorious knight, - "Heere Wyt cumth in, and bryngth in the hed upon his swoorde, . . . " (l.967); and Wit is dressed anew, yet once more, in a "gowne of knoledge" in which to receive Science (l.974). Finally, Science promises herself to Wit very much in terms of the romance story-ending:

> **SCIENCE:** **. . . . for syns ye have smitt**
> **Down my grete enmye, Tedyousnes,**
> **Ye have woon me for ever dowghtles.**
> **(11.1024 ff.)**

There is hardly need to emphasise the means by which the author has wedded his allegory to the conventions of romance, nor the extent to which the moral allegory of the drama resembles the religious allegory of earlier sermon literature. It is important to note also the use to which the disguise of the knight is put, - that is, as a symbol of the moral state of the individual. With the intention of showing change of state, and the appearance of one quality in the guise of another, the Moral Interludes used this device to a very large extent. When the disguise of Vices as Virtues is discussed later in this chapter, it will be worth bearing in mind the interlude of Wit and Science which was a sign-post for the direction in which the disguise theme was to travel.

Not all the interludes treated the knight of romance as seriously as The Pride of Life, Mundus et Infans and Wit and Science. Nicholas Udall, writing fairly late in the history of the interlude, and modelling his play on the Plautine miles gloriosus theme, found the medieval images of romance to be a rich source of comedy for Ralph Roister Doister. Performed in 1553, this interlude uses

the knight-image in a satirical fashion, making comparisons between the roguish protagonist and classical and romance heroes for the purposes of denigration. Prologue's description of the play " . . . which against the vain-glorious doth inveigh", may well imply a criticism of the heroes also.

Briefly, Ralph, a sly lady-killer, and his companion, Matthew Merrygreek, plot to supplant Gawin Goodluck in the affections of Dame Christian Custance. Early in the play, the clever Matthew is slyly poking fun at Ralph by appearing to compare him favourably with the heroes:

> **MATTHEW:** **And ye will not believe what they say in the street,**
> **When your maship passeth by, all such as I meet,**
> **That sometimes I can scarce find what answer to make.**
> **Who is this? (saith one) Sir Launcelot du Lake?**
> **Who is this, great Guy of Warwick, saith another?**
> **No (say I) it is the thirteenth Hercules brother.**
> **Who is this? noble Hector of Troy, saith the third?**
> **No, but of the same nest (say I) it is a bird.**
> **Who is this? great Goliath, Sampson, or Colbrand?**
> **No (say I) it is a Brute of the Alie land.**
> **Who is this? great Alexander? or Charles le Maigne?**
> **No, it is the tenth worthy, say I to them again:**
>
> **(Act I, Scene 2, 11.181 ff.)** 17

In Act 4, Ralph becomes a parody of the romance knight as he prepares an assault upon Christian Custance's household. Arming himself for the fray, with Merrygreek bustling about him in the rôle of a squire, Ralph complains that he lacks "a headpiece". The resourceful Matthew is not at a loss:

> **MATTHEW:** **The kitchen collocavit, the best hens to grece,**
> **Run fet it, Dobinet, and come at once withal,**
> **And bring with thee my potgun, hanging by the wall.**
>
> **(Act 4, Scene 7, 11.348 ff.)**

Meanwhile, in the lady's house the kitchen romance is being

still further explored as Christian gathers forces about her to repel the attack:

CUSTANCE: **Will ye my tale break?**
He threateneth to come hither with all his force to fight,
I charge you, if he come, on him with all your might.
MUMBLE: **I with my distaff will reach him one rap.**
TIBET: **And I with my new broom will sweep him one swap,**
And then with our great club I will reach him one rap.
ALYFACE: **And I with our skimmer will fling him one flap.**
TIBET: **The Trupenie' s firefork will him shrewdly fray,**
And you with the spit may drive him quite away.
(Act 4, Scene 4, 11.179 ff.)

In the final scene of this act, the lady becomes the defending heroine, set about with foes, as she rallies her house-maids:

CUSTANCE: **To it again, my knightesses; down with them all!**
(Act 4, Scene 8, 11.448)

Having beaten off the attack, she claims to have taken the "field":

CUSTANCE: **So this field is ours, we have driven them all away.**
(11. 454.)

In this mock assault, Udall has not only used a comic version of the knight-image, but has also incorporated a romance borrowing from the tournament which had already featured in two earlier plays The Castle of Perseverance(c.1405) and Fulgens and Lucres (1490-1500). Udall owes his greatest debt to Fulgens, for Medwall had structured his play upon the wooing theme, and had devised a comic tournament in which the suitors, servants A and B, compete for the favours of Joan, Lucres' maid. Although the rituals of the tournament are adhered to, the ridiculous pretensions of the two servants to an activity solely reserved to the nobility is underlined by the bawdy dialogue and the domestic limitations of the kitchen in which the contest is to take place:

B. **Without further delay!**
And I shrew his heart that fears,
Either with cronall or sharp spears,
This bargain to assay!

A. **And I beshrew him for me!**
But, abide now; let me see.
Where shall I have a horse?

B. **Nay, we need no horse nor mule**
But let us joust at fart-prick-in-cule.

A. **By St. James! No force!**
Even so be it. But where is our gear?

B. **By my faith, all thing is ready**
That belongeth thereto.

(Part I, 11. 1157 ff.) 18

The contested lady has become the "flower of the frying-pan", and not only enjoys this doubtful epithet, but must act as armourer to the kitchen knights, supplying them with the household equivalents of spears and staves and harness.[19]

There is little doubt that this interlude was a dramatic development of the disguising, for it included, as well as the mock tournament, the variety of games and pastimes for an evening entertainment which were familiar events at the end of the courtly jousts, - songs and minstrelsy, wrestling, moral debate, and within the structure of the interlude itself, a mumming.[20]

This indirect borrowing from romance had first been used within a strictly moral context for The Castle of Perseverance, an interlude designed to be played within a large circular space, having a castle erected at its centre and scaffolds for the principal vices and virtues set around its perimeter.[21] The episode in which World, Devil and Covetyse come down from their respective scaffolds and cross the playing area to attack Mankind in the Castle of Perseverance (11.1973 ff.)[22] resembles the mock assault at

Treviso in 1214,[23] the assault of Love's barons on the Castle of Jealousy in Le Roman de la Rose (1237)[24] and the castle-assaults in the jousts of Henry VIII's reign from 1515 onwards.[25]

The Moral Interludes owed a direct debt to romance for the knight-image, and an indirect one, via the tournament, for the images of castles, sieges and combat. The interludes also show a general romance influence, as has already been partly seen in Wit and Science and Common Conditions, in the narrative structure of the plays. The romances were not only easy to transform into drama, and accommodating towards religious allegory, but provided a narrative framework within which moral formulae could be constructed. Bevington suggests, for example, that the tales of separation, wandering and reunion were ready-made vehicles for the moral themes of "fall from grace, the temporary prosperity of evil, and divine reconciliation".[26] In a few plays the transition from romance to moral interlude can be clearly seen in the continuing importance of the romance narrative, as Bevington suggests.

In some interludes, so strong is the borrowed romance framework it has to be asked whether the compositions were truly meant to be moral plays, or whether moral colouring was added to a popular medieval tale in order to make the whole a commercial certainty guaranteed to offer little offence. Common Conditions is such an interlude, with its courtier, his son and daughter, maids and princes, who represent quite indiscernible moral qualities, if any at all. Certainly there is some message in the loyalty and deception of the servants, Common Conditions and Vice;

and the second scene offers a moral warning on drunkenness and brawling in the figures of Shifte, Drifte and Unthrifte:[27] but the play lacks a moral coherence, the thematic focus to which a true interlude would hold itself. Common Conditions remains a romance drama with some moral credentials. Similarly, the play of Calisto and Melibea, an anonymous composition written in about 1527, is a popular romance[28] uncomfortably accommodating some doubtful moral sentiment. Resembling the Common Conditions formula, Calisto presents us with a chaste heroine and a chivalrous hero, surrounded by scheming servants and companions, finding an end not in the original climax of tragic death, but in the comforts of repentance and salvation. The author succeeds, as Robert Potter says, "only in destroying the entire dramatic procedure."[29]

A happier dramatic product is arrived at where the romance narrative and the moral allegory stand in an equal relationship to the whole as, for example, in Wit and Science. This play demonstrates the possibility of making a serious moral statement within the conventions of a romance plot. The wooing, the quest, the assay and the final union provide the dramatically important predictability and sequence, whilst the lovers, the parents, the monster and the other adversaries of the knight find true and logical counterparts in the philosophy of the play. The same integrity, though in a less serious vein, can be found in Ralph Roister Doister where the very names of the characters, Gawin Goodluck, Tristram Trusty and Christian Custance, would seem to symbolise the marriage of romance and allegory.

An indication of the frequency with which these plays were

produced and the apparent lack of need to make a clear distinction between romance drama and the moral interlude can be found in the records of similar "romantic interludes" about which little or nothing else is now known. The interlude of Kinge Robert of Scissilie, played at Chester, has already been mentioned.[30] The fact that the tale is alluded to in another interlude, Mundus et Infans, says much for the popularity of the romance, or even the dramatised version.[31] There is also a record entered at Stationers' Hall on May 23rd, 1595 of "the enterlude of Valentyne and Orsson"; a second entry for this play was made on March 31st, 1600.[32] That such dramas were also acceptable at court is evidenced by the record of the romantic interlude of Troilus and Pander produced by the Royal Chapel in 1516.[33] The entry is for an anonymous composition, but it was in the following year that William Cornish probably produced the disguising of The Garden of Esperance, using the resources of the Chapel musicians, and it is not unlikely that he was responsible, at least in part, for the production of the drama.

From the foregoing it is clear that far from there being a moral and chronological divorce between the medieval romance and the Tudor interlude, this branch of the developing drama in England availed itself of the continuing popularity of chivalric verse, of the force of its most vital images and the strength of its narrative structure. To such an extent did the two mutually influence each other within the drama, some plays usually listed as "moral interludes" would be better considered under a heading which implies a stage of transition in moral drama moving from romance to interlude.[34] It remains to be seen next whether and how one of the most dramatic devices in the romances, that of

disguise, influenced the stage techniques and philosophical concerns of the developing drama.

Allegory, and dramatic allegory in particular, has to do with the appearance and behaviour of one person or thing in terms of another. It has already been seen, in the context of the pageantic shows of the tournament, with what facility a conjunction of romance disguise and allegory, especially love-allegory, was brought about. There was also a close relationship, through allegory, between the pageants of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the moral interludes. Lydgate, mentioned formerly,[35] developed his technique for the composition of the interlude from his designs for such occasions as the royal entry into London in 1431. Nicholas Udall, whose parody of the tournament and of the chivalric contest between two knightly suitors in Ralph Roister Doister has recently been discussed, was also, twenty years earlier than this interlude, writing verses for the Conduit pageant at the coronation of Anne Boleyn in 1533 very much in Lydgate's vein, with recitations for the Three Graces, Hearty Gladness, Stable Honour and Continual Success.[36] Pageantic allegory, moreover, seemed easily to accommodate figures from romance. Lydgate's 1431 royal entry featured Arthur and his knights:

> **Also att the Condytt in Cornhyll dyd stande a pageant off a goodly Castell well and rychely garnysshed and arayde where satte the ryght noble and victorious emprowr Kynge Arthur wt. a crowne imperiall in complett harnes and a swerde in hys hande wt. the rounde table before hyme. Whiche was accompanyed wt. all the noble prynces thatt were wnder his obeisaunce.**
>
> **37**

Arthur also featured in the pageant for the Emperor Charles in London in June 1522: "under a riche clothe of estate sat Kyng Arthur at a rounde table":[38] before him stood a poet addressing the Emperor in Latin verses. The royal entry staged for Edward VI at the Conduit in 1547 featured verses spoken by Grace, Nature, Fortune and Charity, and by persons representing Valentine and Orson.[39] Romance and allegory were by no means strangers to each other, therefore, during the complex evolvement of Tudor dramatic forms.

It is worth remembering also, in the context of the relationships of these forms and the possibility of disguise standing somewhere amongst them, that in Lydgate's early work there was no real distinction between the interlude and the "devyce of desguysing".[40] Later, in 1517, the assumption that it would not be unfitting to combine the two was clearly being made by Rastell in his directions for the staging of The Nature of the Four Elements. He wrote: ". . . also yf ye lyst ye may brynge in a dysgysing."[41] The insertion of the mumming in Ralph Roister Doister has already been noted here.[42] There had existed since the interludes were first devised, it is clear, a traditional relationship between the masking of identity, as it was practised in the courtly dances and romance-style tournaments, and the assumption of character as it was staged in the moral dramas.

Masking and disguise were, from early times in the theatre, a means to providing rapid transformation for the actor, and reinforced his techniques of performance in the rendering of character, especially in the delineation of evil traits. In The Marriage of Wit and Wisdom, for example, the ogre Irksomness enters wearing a visor which, according to the stage directions, shall be lifted off as he fights off-stage with Wit, and then borne in upon Wit's sword.[43]

In The Longer Thou Livest, the punishment awaiting the unregenerate Moros enters twice, first as God's Judgment, "with a terrible visure" (l.1748), and then as Confusion "with an ill fauowred visure, all thinges beside ill fauoured" (l.1796).[44] Such devices for costuming and character portrayal reach back as far as the classical theatre of Greece and Rome.

From actor-disguise, the device was taken a step further by the moral dramas which endeavoured to emphasise the concept of pretence and deception in the rôle of the vices as seen in their influence upon mankind. The adoption of clothing and names designed to lend an attractiveness to vice, or to give an appearance of its exact antithesis, a seeming virtue, became almost universal in the interludes as an allegorical method. This method also contained another theatrical advantage in providing opportunity for the dramatic unmasking at the end of the play, a technique not unfamiliar to the authors of romance. Thus in Enough is as Good as a Feast (1560), three tempters enter, disguise and re-christen themselves with the avowed purpose to deceive and entrap Worldly Man.[45] In a more sophisticated play, Bale's King John (1538?), Sedition demonstrates for the King the way in which he is omnipresent in all clerical orders and in all nations, in the service of the Pope, wearing a multitude of disguises.[46] Bale also has Satan tempting Christ, in The Temptation of Our Lord (c. 1539), in the guise of a hermit, - "Hic simulata religione Christum aggreditur." (l.77.).[47] In Respublica (1553), Avarice and his henchmen, Insolence, Oppression and Adulation, perform the physical change of disguise onstage as they become Policy, Authority, Reformation and Honesty in order to gain entry to court. Avarice speaks:

Therefore to worke my feate I will my name disguise
And call my name Polycie in stede of Covetise.
The name of Policie is praised of eche one,
. . . . . .

Polycye is ner of any crime detected:
So that under the name and cloke of Policie
Avaryce may weorke factes and scape all ielousie.
(Act I, Scene 1, 11.21 ff.) 48

In Act 1, Scene 4, Insolence suggests, "Lett us then have newe names, eche manne withoute delaye." (1.33.).[49] There follows a long play on names, and the vices then commence to serve Respublica as virtues.

Disguise in order to deceive is common in romance, as it is in other genres, beast fable or fabliau, for example. The hermit or palmer-disguise of the Temptation, found in near-contemporary romance-type tournaments such as the royal jousts of 1513,[50] is a familiar device from the romances of Guy, Bevis, Horn, Octavian, Richard, Isumbras, and from Morte Arthure and The Erl of Tolous. In most of these narratives, though, the device is used with good, not evil intent; and no romance has the devil disguised as a religious person.[51] Respublica comes closer to one common use of disguise in romance in using this deception to gain entry to a place which would normally be barred to the characters concerned. Bevis and Alexander disguise themselves in order to enter the enemy camp;[52] Havelok, Horn, Orfeo and Tristrem also use the device as a means to gain access.[53] The re-naming of vices in moral allegory, so important because in nearly all cases the name defines the evil, and when changed is a measure of the deception, has strong affinities with romance in which names and titles are changed or witheld, and recognisable arms are removed or replaced in order to conceal the purpose, or the quality and power of the individual. Thus the disguised combat in eleven romances,[54] and the concealment of true names in sixteen romances[55] anticipate in the interludes the frequent conflict of mankind with an adversary yet to be recognised

for what he represents and threatens, and the masking of the fearsome strength and subtlety of evil power.

Where the Moral Interludes close with the romances and are most likely to have been influenced by them is in the area of costume-symbolism, the method by which the dramatists underlined their moral meaning by demonstrating it for the audience in costume change. Change, as seen in the degradation and reformation of Man, is central to the concerns of the Moral Interlude; and just as the dramatists directed that intransigent evil in the figures of giants and ogres shall always be hideously apparalled and fearsomely masked, so they ensured that the mutable nature of mankind shall be reflected in his changing appearance. That a description of the inner state should be mirrored by the outward appearance was one of the recurring ideas found in the work of the romancers, particularly in such poems as Guy of Warwick, Sir Isumbras, Sir Orfeo and Sir Gowther, where the concept of moral strength or wholeness is examined.[56]

The importance which the dramatists attached to the appearance of major characters in the moral plays can be seen, even in the earliest interludes, in the exactitude which characterises the directions for staging dramas. In Wisdom (c.1460), for example, the title character must enter establishing his majesty and power thus:

> **. . . . in a ryche purpull clothe of golde wyth mantyll of the same ermynnydde wythin, hawynge abowt hys neke a ryall hood furred wyth ermyn, wpon hys hede a cheweler wyth browys, a berde of golde of sypres curlyd, a ryche imperyall crown þerwpon sett wyth precyus stonys and perlys, in hys leyfte honde a balle of golde wyth a cros þerwpon and in hys ryght honde a regall schepter, ...**
> **(Scene 1; opening.)** [57]

The appearance of Mind, Will and Understanding, as yet unsmirched by the beguiling temptations of Lucifer, are described as "all thre in wyght cloth of golde, chevelryde and crestyde in sute." (Scene 1; playwright's final direction). Moral character established thus with such forceful visual imagery, the dancing, trumpeting and garish figures attendant upon the fallen Mind, Will and Understanding, ("Se howe ye haue dysvyguryde yowr soule!" Wisdom: l.901.), appear so much the more vicious:

> **Here entur six dysgysede in þe sute of MYNDE, wyth rede berdys, and lyouns rampaunt on here crestys, and yche a warder in hys honde; her mynstrallys, trumpes . . .**
>
> **(Scene III, 11.692 ff.)**

> **Here entrethe six jorours in a sute, gownyde, wyth hodys abowt her nekys, hattys of meyntenance þervpon, vyseryde dyuersly; here mynstrell, a bagpype . . .**
>
> **(Scene III, 11.725 ff.)**

> **Here entreth six women in sut, thre dysgysyde as galontys and thre as matrones, wyth wondyrfull vysurs congruent, here mynstrell, a hornepype . . .**
>
> **(Scene III, 11.752 ff.)**

Here Wisdom compels Mind to look into his soul. Again, the inner state is seen in terms of a disfigured image moving across the playing area: "Here ANIMA apperyth in þe most horrybull wyse, fowlere þan a fende." (1.903.). From beneath her mantle small devils emerge, run about, and thence return. The audience will now recall having first seen her as a maid:

> **. . . in a wyght clothe of golde gysely purfyled wyth menyver, a mantyll of blake þerwppeon, a cheueler lyke to WYSDOM, wyth a ryche chapplet lasyde behynde hangynge down wyth to knottys of golde and syde tasselys knelynge down to WYSDOM, . . .**
>
> **(Scene I, 11.17 ff.)**

Repentance follows; and Mind, Will and Understanding are next seen restored to their former selves, symbolically dressed in the costumes in which they first appeared, but now being crowned:

> **Here entrethe ANIMA, wyth þe Fyve Wyttys goynge before, MYNDE on þe syde and WNDYRSTONDYNGE on þe other syde and WYLL folowyng, all in her fyrst clothynge, her chapplettys and crestys, and all hauyng on crownys, syngynge in here commynge in:**
>
> **(Scene IV, 11.1064.)**

In all the instances of costume-changing in Wisdom, the disguise or the change of moral state is seen in terms of re-entry on stage, the visual image having been altered appropriately off-stage while the audience follows another area of the plot. This also happens in Respublica when the daughters of God, Mercy, Verity, Justice and Peace, come to shield Respublica from her enemies and to instruct her in her reformed conduct. The daughters then accompany Respublica off-stage to bring about the symbolic change.

> **MISERIC: Nowe Sisters goe wee, and Respublica with us to be newe appareled otherwyse then thus.**
>
> **IUSTIC: Come on Respublica with us to wealth from wooe.**
>
> (Actus quinti, scena quarta, 11.31 ff.) 58

Respublica returns in her new garments to rebuke and discharge Avarice. People also appears, new-clad in a coat betokening his change to prosperity.

A parallel can be drawn between this off-stage change of costume significant of a change of resolve and heralding a change in the state of things to come in the interludes and certain episodes in the romances, especially where disguised combat is about to challenge

and defeat injustice and oppression, as in Sir Gowther or Le Morte Arthur (stanzaic), for example, or is to resolve or win a new relationship, especially in the love context, as in Sir Eglamour or Ipomadon.[59] The unexpected appearance of the challenging knight, unrecognisable by virtue of his changed bearings and devices has the same dramatic impact as the vice or virtue symbolising his challenge of the status quo by a difference in costume and dramatic posture.

Most interludes, however, contrive to demonstrate the change of moral purpose, as the romances do for the most part, by allowing the audience to be a witness to the act. Wit and Science, which has already been discussed in this section in the context of the borrowed knight and quest-images, is close to the romances in the treatment of disguise.

Wit, for the time being forgetting his suit of Science, grows over-fond of Honest Recreation and, insisting on dancing a galliard with her, symbolises the forsaking of his real love by throwing off his scholar's gown. The abandonment of armour or royal insignia to symbolise a change of purpose is not uncommon in romance: Guy of Warwick denotes his religious reformation thus; and Orfeo casts off the trappings and obligations of kingship in this way in order to pursue a more important element in his life.[60]

Wit then sinks fatigued into the arms of Idleness, and there falls asleep. The sleeping hero is then disguised without his knowledge as Idleness blackens his face and changes his garment of wisdom for the fool's garb belonging to Ignorance. T.W. Craik[61] interprets this act as significant of the growing obscurity of Wit's purpose and mental faculties. He also draws attention to the link

with the black-faced fool of the Morris dances. Mention has already been made here of the relationship between the blackening of the fool and the blackening of faces as occurring in the romances; in Guy of Warwick (11.6105 ff.) and King Horn (11.1082 ff.)[62] this is a part of the disguise which helps the heroes to escape detection. It is also worth noting that in at least three English romances individuals are changed in some way by outside agents as they sleep: in romance this is usually associated with what has been called the "tree convention".[63]

Wit's disguise as a fool causes Science to fail to recognise him, - a turn of events frequently come upon in romance before the final reunion.[64] Wit seems, temporarily, to be even further from his goal. To add to his adversity, Science's father, Reason, enters to beat Wit, for his fecklessness, with Shame. But Wit, meanwhile, has seen his own image in Reason's glass, and vows he will marry none other than Science (11.808 ff.). His new resolve is signified by the entrance of Instruction, his old companion and adviser, who brings on to the stage Wit's "new aparell" (Actus quinti, scena nona, 11.61-114.) 65.

This scene of recognition and reunion also includes an unmasking of a kind. There are similar unmaskings in the interludes, including that in Respublica, when the true nature of Avarice is revealed as his bags of "rye" are opened and seen to contain the spoils of his maladministration. Subsequently, his advisers are stripped to show beneath the gaudy dress of gallants of the town (11.1686 ff.). Craik notes "the spectacular effects which . . accompany the removal of disguise in the interludes",[66] and compares this gesture with the unmasking at the climax of the court disguisings. The precedents for this dramatic closure to narrative and drama were present long

before this, though, in one of the most common means to ending the romances, with unmasking, or revealing of identity, recognition, re-union with family or lovers, and, finally, marriage.[67] Unmasking in the romances, as in the interludes, is a prelude to harmony after times of adversity and disarray.

The on-stage disguise or change of apparel , with the audience as witness, is repeated throughout the interludes, and in some cases compares closely with the dramatic style in which change of status or moral condition are managed in the romances. As is the case in Wit and Science and Respublica, the gift or change of a garment is a dramatic act full of symbolic force. The romances, using the narrative, rather than the dramatic art, anticipated this, as the disguise-scene in Wit and Science, with its strong dependence on the narrative lines of romance, suggests.

Garments of penitence given to the individual in token of reformation or restored good character, are common in the interludes and, again, are usually placed upon the actor before the audience. In The Interlude of Youth (1520), Youth is persuaded to forsake his companions, Riot and Pride, and is given a new garment and "beads for your devotion": he also takes up a new name, Good Contrition.[68] Hickscorner (1513), generally thought to be adapted from an early version of Youth,[69] ends in a similar manner. Freewill and Imagination, companions-in-vice to the title character, are compelled to repent their misdeeds. Freewill is given a new garment upon begging mercy for his sins. Imagination, who is brought to see himself in the grip of death and damnation, pleads mercy, and is clad anew. Imagination also receives the name of Good Remembrance whose purpose is to keep him in his reformed ways, and to remind the

audience of the moral of the drama:

> **And loke that ye forget not Repentaunce;**
> **Than to heven ye shall go the nexte waye . . .**
>
> . . . . . .
>
> **Unto the whiche blysse I beseche God Almyghty**
> **To brynge there your soules that here be present**
> **And unto vertuous lyvynge that ye maye applye,**
> **Truly for to kepe his commaundmente.**
>
> **(11.1016 ff.) 70**

In Everyman (1495), the most celebrated of Moral Interludes, the crucial transformation of Everyman from a state of sin into a state of grace is accomplished in the central sequence of the play. He scourges his body and, acknowledging Christ as his redeemer, asks Mary for her intercession (11.601 ff.).[71] Good Deeds then rises to accompany him on his future journey, calling him "pilgrim, my special friend" (1.529); Everyman's book of reckoning, formerly obscured by his sins, is now seen to be clear; and Knowledge places upon the penitent a garment named Contrition:

> **KNOWLEDGE: Put on this garment to thy behoof,**
> **Which is wet with your tears,**
> **Or else before God you may it miss,**
> **When ye to your journey's end come shall.**
>
> **EVERYMAN: Gentle Knowledge, what do ye call it?**
>
> **KNOWLEDGE: It is a garment of sorrow:**
> **From pain it will you borrow;**
> **Contrition it is,**
> **That geteth forgiveness;**
> **It pleaseth God passing well.**
>
> **(11.638 ff.)**

Beauty, Strength, Discretion and Five Wits enter, and Good Deeds enjoins them to go with Everyman to "help him in his pilgrimage." (1.673.).

There are several comparisons to be made with the romances in these few excerpts. The first and most obvious point to make is that changes of garment, often for the purposes of disguise, frequently accompany a change of heart or of direction in life in the individuals of romance. In the interlude examples with which we are dealing deceptive disguise is not the purpose of the change of dress; but often enough in romance the desire not to be known does not always imply deception. Romance heroes often take up a disguise in order to dissociate themselves from the style of life of former times, or even from a former identity; in this there is a similarity with the taking up of penitential garments in the interludes. Lancelot does this in Le Morte Arthur in order to avoid declaring, by his very appearance, his supreme chivalric prowess;[72] Ipomadon, as the fool, does the same thing;[73] Sir Orfeo, initially, does not cast off his kingly dress in order to deceive, but in order to symbolise his loss of a former state:

> **For now ichaue mi quen y-lore,**
> **Þe fairest leuedi þat euer was bore,**
> **Neuer eft y nil no woman se.**
> **In-to wildernes ichil te,**
> **& liue þer euermore.**
>
> **74**

The direction, given by a figure of authority, to take up a changed appearance, which is found in each of the interlude examples dealt with so far, is not unfamiliar to the romances either. The highly moral Sir Gowther and Robert of Sicily,[75] with disguise imposed by papal decree and by divine authority, come very close to the interludes in this respect. It cannot be forgotten, either that Perceval, Libeaus, le Freine and Degaré are also, albeit within a different context, subject to the wishes of others in the matter

of who they are and in what style they must live. Perceval and Libeaus are for good and valid reasons disguised, and so kept from conflict and mortal danger.[76]

New names, more often than not, accompany change in appearance in romance. Again, this is not always for the purpose of deception. The names of Degaré, le Freine and Emaré are attached to individuals because, as in the case of naming in the interludes, they are significant of the state, or condition, or purpose of those individuals.[77] Ipomadon insists on calling himself what, henceforth, he intends to be, - "the stravnge valete".[78] Guy of Warwick changes his name to "Youn"[79] for the same reason that he blackens his face and hair; that is, so that he shall not be associated with the fame and prowess of his former self. The separation from former self is, it is quite certain, central to the concerns of the Moral Interludes.

Guy of Warwick has another special relationship with one of the interludes mentioned here, - The Interlude of Everyman, in which the hero becomes a pilgrim upon recognising the wrongs which have made up his past life, an interlude in which reformation takes place in the central sequence, with a journey of testing and trial to be undertaken. This follows exactly the pattern of Guy's experience as he climbs into the tower to survey the majesty of God's Creation, and suffers in his consciousness the awareness of the omission of God from his former thoughts and actions.[80] The scourging of Everyman is for Guy the laceration of conscience. He takes up no garment, but vows to cast from himself his fine coverings:

Y schal walk for mi sinne
Barfot bi doun & dale.

and he takes upon himself the life of atonement proper to the pilgrim:

Þat ich haue wiþ mi bodi wrou3t
Wiþ mi bodi it schal be bou3t,
To bote me of þat bale.

(Auchinleck 11.7242 ff.)

Everyman is not so far from Guy's resolve:

In the name of the Holy Trinity,
My body sore punished shall be:
Take this, body, for the sin of the flesh!
Also thou delightest to go gay and fresh,
And in the way of damnation thou did me bring,
Therefore suffer now strokes of punishing.
Now of penance I will wade the water clear,
To save me from purgatory, that sharp fire.

(11. 611 ff.)

Guy of Warwick is not unique in this relationship with Everyman. Isumbras, scourged in his own fashion by a life of toil and labour, his body wounded in defence of the Christian king, takes so much time as will bring him to health (denying his true name meanwhile), and then dresses himself as a palmer to go on a pilgrimage:

He hym purveyde scryppe and pyke
And dyghte him a palmere lyke,
Ageyn that he wolde wende.

(11.493 ff.) 81

Like the romance of Guy, Sir Isumbras resembles Everyman in that the reformation of character and change of dress is placed centrally in the narrative with, in this knight's story, seven more years of journeying and testing before his moral strength and resolve are proven.[82]

It appears, then, that Wit and Science, remarkable for its adaption of romance narrative outline and its use of a romance form of the disguise device, is not unique in bearing strong

similarities in other respects to the romances, in particular in the central matter of the relationship of disguise and the symbolism of appearance. Change of garment in the interludes is associated with changing moral state; this is often so in the romances. Interlude characters do not always disguise themselves in order to deceive; neither do the characters of romance. The casting away of former garments, in both genres, often symbolises dissociation from a former life. Similarly, in both genres, the garments signifying change are sometimes given by a figure of great power, often endowed with divine authority. Finally, the change of dress is often made in favour of the palmer's style as a prelude to a long period of moral pilgrimage. The interludes may not always be dealing with disguise outside the area of vice/virtue deception, or beyond the strictly theatrical disguise of actor as dramatis persona; but the powerful dramatic images employed in these plays of contrition, reformation, testing and moral resolve, as symbolised in costume change, were anticipated in the romances by some hundreds of years. There is no reason why, just as the interludes adapted romance images of knights, quests, and wooing to the drama, and carried the moral within a romance narrative framework, these forceful romance images of disguise should not have been adapted to the allegorical symbolism of the moral plays also.

Apparel received by interlude characters are not always penitential garments. Some, like the robes given to the title character in Skelton's Magnificence (1515), betoken a new state of grace; these are earned by Magnificence under the tuition of Good Hope, and tested in the form of questioning by Redress. Significantly, Magnificence undergoes his education dressed in the meanest of rags.[83] Having been restored to his former appearance, he is

subsequently re-instated in his former position in his palace "with Ioy and Ryalte".[84]

John Commonweal, victim rather than perpetrator of sins in Three Estates (1540-52), is also given new clothing as a symbol of restoration to a lost and rightful position. In this political satire two kings, Correction and Humanitie, sit in judgement assessing penalties and awards. Suddenly, John bursts in upon the proceedings, dressed in rags, and accuses Spirituality, Sensuality, Covetise and The Temporality of vice, and of neglect of the common folk. The vices are hanged, the power of the Church is curtailed, and John Commonweal receives new clothing and a place in the parliament.[85]

The change from ragged disguise to clothing which is proper to the hero's rightful or deserved state is also found in the romances. Sir Isumbras arrives, after his seven years' pilgrimage, one "Of seke men that myghte not go,/And of hem that pooreste wore." (l.557 f.)[86] Upon recognition, he is feasted and crowned (although his original rank is that of a knight):

> **Now is syr Isumbras ryghte**
> **Crowned kynge, that hardy knyghte,**
> **Of many ryche londes thare.**
>
> **(11.715 ff.)**

Orfeo, arriving at his own palace, his queen safely won back, elects to appear in his poor rags in order to test the loyalty of his Steward. Following the conditional sequence commencing, "3if ich were Orfeo þe king . . (l.558),[87] and the sudden awareness of the court that this is indeed the king, Orfeo is taken, his appearance is changed, and he is made to be seen as a king "apert":

To chaumber þai ladde him als biliue
& baþed him, & schaued his berd,
& tired him as a king apert;
& seþþen, wiþ gret processioun,
Þai brou3t þe quen in-to þe toun
Wiþ al maner menstraci.

(11.584 ff.)

It is clear from these examples that the visual image of worthiness restored is as vital to the romances as it is to the dramatic action of the interludes.

Garments in the interludes can, conversely, symbolise the fallen state; when Mankind, for example, in the play of that name, written between 1465 and 1470, is instructed in sin by Nought, Nowadays and New Guise, and is exhorted to rob, steal and kill, he is given a new coat and a dagger by the three rogues:

MYSCHEFF: **3e must haue be yowr syde a longe da pacem,**
As trew men ryde þe wey for to onbrace þem,
Take þer monay, kytt þer throtys, thus ouerface þem.
"I wyll," say 3e.

MANKYNDE: **I wyll, ser.**

NOUGHT: **Here ys a joly jakett! How sey 3e?**

NEW GYSE: **Yt ys a goode jake of fence for a mannys body.**
Hay,doog, hay! whoppe whoo! Go yowr wey lyghtly!

(Scene 2, ll. 714 ff.) 88

Disguise signifying degradation is frequently come upon in the romances. In Robert of Sicily, the king is forced, as part of his correction, to change his appearance for that of a fool and it is only when he has become aware of his own foolishness in pride that he is restored to his former state. God's angel makes the judgement upon him:

"Þow art my fol," seide þe angel;
"Þou schal be schoren, euerichdel,
Lych a fool, a fool to be.
. . . . . .

Þi counseyler schal ben an ape,
And o cloþing ou worþ ischape:

(11.153 ff.) 89

There is a comparison here with Sir Gowther which has already been discussed.[90]

Not all knights in romance have this change imposed upon them. The romance individual often needs to re-inforce his moral resolve with outward and visible signs which he takes upon himself. Degaré, for example, when he decides to set forth to find his true parents, listens to his hermit foster-father as he urges that he should take a "hors and god armur" (l. 320).[91] The implication is that without them he "myght nowt dure", and that they would be befitting his true rank. Degaré refuses armour, and takes only one rough weapon for his defence to symbolise his, as yet, unproven knightly rank:

He hew adoun, boþe gret and grim,
To beren in his hond wi3 him,
A god sapling of an ok.
. . . . . .

Swich a bourdon to him he founde.

(11.323 ff.)

The description of the weapon in terms of the traditional emblem of the pilgrim is, in this context, no piece of stock imagery from a professional rhymer. The knight is embarking upon a pilgrimage of identity.[92]

Orfeo, as has been mentioned before, changes his appearance according to his own wishes. Describing the King's period of wandering in the wilderness, the poet is at pains to bring great poetic

force to the distinction between what the man once was, and what he is now:

He þat hadde y-werd þe fowe & griis,
& on bed þe purper biis
- Now on hard heþe he liþ,
Wiþ leues & gresse he him wriþ.
He þat had castels & tours,
Riuer, forest, friþ wiþ flours
- Now, þei it comenci to snewe & frese,
Þis king mot make his bed in mese.
He þat had y-had kni3tes of priis
Bifor him kneland, & leuedis
- Now seþ he no-þing þat him likeþ,
. . . . . .

Al his bodi was oway duine
For missays, and al to-chine.
. . . . . .

His here of his berd, blac & rowe,
To his girdel-stede was growe.

(11.241 ff.) 93

Orfeo's changed appearance is described in terms of loss. In this poet's language, it is the concrete manifestation of the loss in the King's existence, that is, his queen and, in the broader sense, his power to determine his own life.

Ipomadon's disguise is of a different nature. Three times he chooses the guise of an individual alien to, and beneath, his own true quality, - as the "straynge valete" (11.430 ff.), as the queen's foppish and effete "dru" (11.2736 ff.) and as the clownish knight (11.6223 ff.).[94] His love for La Fiere has precipitated in Ipomadon a crisis in which the opposite of these assumed characters, the lordly and elegant suitor, famed for his chivalry and prowess, is no longer adequate to his own conception of what should be offered to the beloved lady. He deliberately degrades himself, in appearance and behaviour, in order to prove that love demands both more, and less, than the chivalric ideal.[95]

An attempt has been made here to suggest that all these examples from romance in which disguises are devised or appearance is changed in order to restore dignity or temporarily to degrade, share with the Moral Interludes (in particular Mankind and Three Estates with which these examples are compared) a moral preoccupation. A general point of some importance also emerges. The Moral Interludes are not at such a literary distance from the romances as might be generally supposed. In the first place, the romancers knew how to provide, for predominantly oral transmission, the most dramatic techniques of narrative, including one of the most dramatic devices of all, that of disguise: in this respect they were as skilled as the Tudor dramatists. Furthermore, it is not the case that the interludes were moral and the romances were not. On the surface this may seem to be the case: but it has already been argued here,[96] that the English metrical romance was much preoccupied with, amongst other things, the relationship of the individual to himself, to his society and to God, and attempted to describe how these relationships could be worked out. V.B. Richmond, in fact, argues that the highly moral stance of many of the English romances provided the basis for their extraordinarily long-lasting popularity and continuing influence.[97] Dieter Mehl, in his study of the romances of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, would agree with this.[98]

Disguise in the interlude does not always point the moral alone: its presence is sometimes seen in a dual function, - to describe the moral direction of the action, and to provide episodic farce. Merbury, in The Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom, for example, adapted Redford's Wit and Science with the provision of comedy

very much in mind. The vice Idleness, in the earlier play, is the character discussed here already who transforms Wit into an unrecognisable fool, by blackening his face and disguising his dress. In The Marriage, Merbury creates Idleness as a roguish figure with a multitude of dishonest intentions, the first being to marry Wit off to Wantonness. His repeated attempts and failures to do this, and the legal and financial difficulties which attend his mishandling of the situation, require him to enter frequently upon the action in a variety of disguises. From this character, and his recurrent appearance in increasingly unbelievable guises, Merbury extracts the maximum farcical effect. The dramatist also ensures in stage direction, as well as by means of dialogue, that the purely visual effect of disguise shall be as humorous as possible.

The comic use of disguise, as has already been suggested, was not unfamiliar to the romancers; and it is interesting to compare some romance episodes with the disguise scenes in The Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom.[99]

Idleness begins to work towards the marriage of Wit and Wantonness by posing as Honest Recreation, - a common enough vice/virtue disguise device in the interludes, - and he enlists the aid of Wantonness herself to deceive Wit. As "Honest Recreation", Idleness engages Wit's attention, and promises to lead him to the house of a marriageable gentle-woman named "Modest Mirth". When he arrives, Wantonness sings him to sleep, and Idleness steals his purse (Scene II, ll.200 ff.). The episode is reminiscent of Geffrey's disguise in The Tale of Beryn, who also disguises himself in order to make dupes of others, save that in Geffrey's case, his disguise is wholly successful.[100] Idleness, having got as far as stealing Wit's money, is subsequently found out by Wit's guardian, Good

Nurture.

Idleness then poses as a physician:

> **Now I am new arrayed like a physician! . .**
>
> **. . . . . .**
>
> **For now I will call my name Due Disport, fit for all souls.**
>
> **(Scene III, 11.253 ff.)**

He falls in with the villains Snatch and Catch, however, and loses his money. Snatch and Catch tie him up in a sheet they have stolen from an inn, and leave him.

Up to this point in the drama, the emphasis has been on change of name and the denoting thereby of moral decadence. In the fourth scene (Part II), Idleness enters fleeing from the punishment of the law in the person of Search. Merbury directs:

> **Enter Idleness halting with a stilt, and shall carry a cloth upon a staff, like a rat-catcher, and say,**
>
> **IDLENESS: Have you any rats or mice, polecats or weasels? . .**
>
> **(Scene IV, 11.460 ff.)**

While he explains that a proclamation is out against him, and that upon arrest he will be hanged, a weary and irritable Search approaches:

> **Here he espieth Search coming in, and goeth up and down, saying, "Have you any rats or mice?" as in the first five lines.**
>
> **(Stage direction; 11. 469 ff.)**

There then follows a conversation between the two men, one in the process of searching for the other; the other, disguised, successfully avoiding discovery.

This type of comic disguise is not unlike the beginning of both King Edward and the Shepherd and Rauf Coilyear.[101] It is closer still, though, to the episode in Kyng Alisaunder where the king determines to meet his old adversary Porus and tempt him to battle. He achieves this subt ly, disguised as a squire "vpon his mule,/ Bishiten and bydagged foule, . . . (ll.5475 f.).[102] King Porus questions him about his presence in the city, and the "squire" explains that he is the chamberlain of Alexander come urgently to purchase provisions. Porus accepts the explanation; and when he asks the "squire" about his master, Alexander gives him a description of himself which compares with Idleness' impersonation of the lame rat-catcher:

> **. . . . a litel man and an elde,**
> **And had on at the mete for þe chelde**
> **Twoo þik mantels, yfurred wiþ grys.**
>
> **(ll. 5490 ff.)**

Later in the scene, Search turns out to be as cunning a rogue as Idleness, devising a means to steal a sixpence from him. Merbury directs that Idleness, realising how he has been deceived, "shall cast away his stilt, and run after him." (ll.535; stage direction). In other words, he unmasks his character in the most farcical manner. Something of the same effect was sought by the English redactor of Guillaume de Palerne who has William, dressed as a hart, save Melior, the "hind", from falling overboard from a ship, when he picks her up in his arms and, walking on his hind legs to the astonishment of the ship's boy, carries her safely ashore (ll.2764 ff.).[103]

By Scene VI, Idleness has become destitute as a result of his mismanagement of his stratagems and his own affairs. He now enters, "dressed as a beggar" (ll.573; stage direction). Hungry, but without the means to feed himself, he steals a pot ofporridge, is caught

by Inquisition, and is condemned to be whipped in the town on the next market day. Even so, quite unbowed, Idleness is again on the scene as Wit is finally to be married to Wisdom. The scene opens - "Enter Idleness like a priest" - with Idleness addressing the audience as he struggles into vestments which are clearly stolen from some person of a smaller stature. He also confides that his life of disguise will always sustain him:

> **IDLENESS:** **O the passion of God! I have escaped a scouring.**
> **Here hath been heave and shove! This gear if not fit;**
> **In faith I have lain in the church for cozening of Wit:**
> **Now he shall be married all the haste;**
> **When Wit and Wisdom is joined together, then I am rejected.**
> **Well yet I can shift elsewhere, so long as I am not detected.**
> **Detected I cannot well be; I am of that condition**
> **That I can turn into all colours like the chameleon:** [104]
> **Although some do refuse me, and some leaden-heeled lubber will not refrain me;**
> **And when men have done with me, women will retain me;**
> **(Scene IX, 11.682 ff.)**

In this instance, the comedy of the disguise is brought out in Idleness' speech (although, clearly, such speech provides generously for the individual actor's imaginative techniques for stage business). More than this, though, Merbury has emphasised the farcical aspect of the physical act of disguising oneself, much as the author of William of Palerne had done in the bears' dressing scene,[105] and as the Northern author of Octavian did in handling the arming of Florent.[106] In the last composition, the difficulties which Clement and Gladwyn encounter with the rusty armour and sword,[107] would be summed up admirably in Idleness' comment: "here hath been heave and shove".

A proportion of the farcical element in the Octavian episode arises from the fact that Florent is indeed of knightly rank, although fostered and reared in a bourgeois environment as the son of a butcher. In arming himself in the battered remains of some ancient armour he is, in fact, a noble youth, temporarily disguised as a member of the bourgeoisie, aspiring in his arming preparations to the activities of the nobility. Similarly, much of the comedy of Idleness' attempts to disguise himself as, of all things, a priest, springs from the fact that apart from his initial appearance as himself, we have seen him as Honest Recreation, a physician, a lame rat-catcher and a beggar. There is no doubt that in the case of Idleness and Florent, the incongruous compounding of disguises and identities cannot but heighten the comic effect.

It is not only through parody, then, that the comic elements in the interludes relate to the romances, although Ralph Roister Doister and Fulgens and Lucres, as we have seen, might argue that this is the case. The comedy of disguise, as well as its more sinister and morally disturbing nature, was exploited by at least one Tudor interlude dramatist in ways which resemble the techniques of the romancers. Merbury has called upon a humorous approval of a disguise working successfully to dupe a gullible victim; he employs the technique of the disguised individual encountering another who would treat him very differently were he aware of the other's true identity; and he has enlarged upon the physical comedy of disguise, showing the farcical effect achieved when disguise is suddenly and urgently dropped, and also giving the audience a pleasurable humour as they witness the putting-on of garments which do not properly belong to the individual. All these techniques were anticipated by those

romancers who concerned themselves with the comic use of disguise. This is not to say that the Tudor dramatists were plagiarising directly from one source. Rather it suggests that, with many other influences available, and with the romances (significantly, most of those recently compared with the interludes) continuing to be printed and performed in dramatised versions contemporary with the production of these plays, the comic disguise technique of the romances was one of many contributing influences.

Merbury is the only dramatist dealt with in this context chiefly because he, more than most, sought the comic vein in which to write his play, having taken an already-created character from Redford's version of the drama, the somewhat insidious Idleness, and re-fashioned that creation in the style of farce. Other interludes used the comic disguise technique including, for example, Three Lords and Three Ladies of London (1589), in its use of the characters, Fraud and Dissimulation, and The Pedlar's Prophecy (1561), where the pedlar, disguised as a priest, meets the Justice who seeks him and tells him that the pedlar "is a little man, sir, even of my stature." Comparisons in this area could be extended to fill a greater compass than this discussion can afford.

Conclusion

The popularity of the English metrical romance survived long beyond the latest dates of composition. This is evidenced by the commercial success with which they were distributed once printing had become established, by the fact that the general appetite for such romances was beginning to encourage the importation of romances

from the Continent, and by the strength and frequency of the attacks against such literature by moralists and men of letters. Records suggest that romances were an influence in the theatre (apart from public and, probably dramatised, recitations, and theatrical versions of the royal jousts) as early as 1444, and continued to be so well in to the seventeenth century. This influence constituted simply the dramatisation of the romance narratives.

Outside romance drama, the contemporary developing form, the Moral Interlude, shows signs of romance influence. Debts to romance found in the interludes include the knight-image, the quest and wooing themes, castle sieges and assaults, and tournament combat, - some of these, it has to be said, parodied; others are used in a serious allegorical form. In the case of the Christ-knight image, found in Mundus et Infans, religious allegory had already borrowed this from romance long before the dramatic form of moral allegory was inspired by it. The strong narrative framework of romance was also used in the interludes to provide a vehicle for allegory. In some such examples, the drama is weighted towards the romantic, rather than the moral, content; in others, the romance/Moral Interlude influences seem to be reciprocal, resulting in a hybrid "romantic interlude".

The relationship between romance disguise and allegory, already discussed in Chapter 6, is found also in the Moral Interludes. Vices disguised and re-named themselves on-stage, in the presence of the audience, as virtues, to symbolise deception in human affairs, parallelling similar episodes in romance. Disguises are used to gain access and entry in the interludes; names are witheld to conceal purpose or power; both these disguise devices were anticipated in romance. The special use of garments, put on and removed in order

to symbolise penance, degradation, restoration and reformation, were as vital to the visual imagery and stage-business of the Tudor dramas as they were to the symbolism of the romancers. The dramatic effect of the un-masking of the disguised individual is as powerful at the close of the interlude as it was at the end of the romance narrative; the putting-on and taking-off of disguises, and the recurrent examples of re-naming, as found in the symbolical changes of heart and belief in the interludes, finds a strong counterpart in some of the morally-concerned romances; and the pilgrim disguise in the interludes, as in romance, is often a prelude to a period of psychological testing and physical hardship. In all these instances, the use of disguise in the interludes and the romances is working towards a moral end.

Comparisons in the comic techniques of disguise have also been made in examples where the morality lies in the background, but the dramatist's and the romancer's chief intent is towards entertainment. The comic effects of deceit and physical incongruity and indignity have been closely compared in examples from the romances and from Merbury's The Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom.

Comparison does not provide proof in the question of literary influence. At all times, many influences are present in contemporary literature and in life itself, to provide ample inspiration for any one composition. The parallels put forward in this chapter suggest that, while romance was enjoying great popularity during the developing period of the Moral Interlude, and while dramatic versions of the romances were being staged in London and provincial playhouses, the Tudor dramatists were using the same techniques, narrative framework

and disguise devices, (morally serious and comically entertaining), as the romances had done and, in their contemporary survival, were continuing to do. The argument that the romances and the romance disguise theme contributed to some extent to the techniques of the interlude dramatists has more than a little likelihood within it.

General Conclusion

An attempt has been made in Part III to suggest, in the first place, that the romances, and in particular the disguise theme, were influential in literature and also, socially, in periods beyond those in which they were written. Secondly, from historical records and literary texts, some examination and definition of this influence has been made.

Politically and socially the romances and the disguise themes were used to gain personal prestige and a sense of national unity for insecure monarchs and for the turbulent state of England. They were also used to transform and to regularise the politically and socially hazardous sports of the tournament.

An off-shoot of this transformation was the development of courtly entertainments, initially outdoor, and subsequently indoor, which owed much of their appeal to forms of disguise and which, being elaborated upon and developed, particularly in the reign of Henry VIII, evolved into what came to be known as the masque.

Medieval romance, in the meanwhile, remained strong and

vigorous on its own account, surviving in vast outputs of cheap printed versions, and in dramatised versions played to London and provincial audiences. At the same time, romance and romance disguise themes, although castigated as immoral, were being borrowed and copied from by the writers of the Moral Interludes. Upon examination it emerges that the moral plays and many of the English romances shared the same serious concerns with the life of Man, his relationship to other living men and to God. Similar uses of the disguise technique are to be found in the interludes and the romances, and similar methods for using disguise in the comic vein are also evident.

No claim is made for any theme or themes of the romances to be solely influential upon the interludes. Romance popularity and influence was strong at the time of which we are speaking, however, and a probability has been suggested here as to the interludes' indebtedness, in some stated respects, to the romances and their themes of disguise.

SUMMARY

SUMMARY

An attempt has been made here to examine the function of a single theme in the Middle English romances; to suggest the possibility of the antiquity and the diversity, as well as the commonplace and contemporaneous, origins of this theme; and to show, within certain chronological limits, the lasting popularity and the usefulness, social and political as well as literary, of some of the romances, including those which carry the disguise theme.

In the first part of this examination, it is clear that seldom was the disguise theme used only to satisfy a demand for the conventions of the entertainment, to carry along the narrative, or to enlarge the character to the correct "romantic" proportions. The theme has been shown to perform many functions, and in some romances is multi-functional. In many examples discussed, the theme is used to analyse moral and profoundly serious questions of human existence, to comment on individual and group relationships, and to point up the comedy of living. Individuality of composition has also been demonstrated in this examination. When borrowing from sources has taken place, in nearly every case the material has been adapted.

In an examination of sources in the second part of the discussion, the tendency amongst the English poets to "Anglicise" the original emerges more clearly. English redactions from Anglo-Norman sources show a tendency, whilst using the disguise theme,

to exploit opportunities to broaden the romance genre as a whole, to develop a less exclusive, less mannered and aristocratic, and more accommodating, style of romance: the larger use of comedy, the depiction of a broader type of character, and a highly perceptive concept of human relationships are the hallmark of the English poet as compared with his Anglo-Norman predecessor.

Other sources include popular tales and legends, some from classical sources. The theme, often found in well-known tales, of the escape of the hero in women's clothing, is one of the few disguise devices available in sources which is not worked into the romances. It appears, therefore, that in this omission there lies an element of the definition of the romance hero.

The monasteries were great collectors of stories, some with a degree of veracity attached to them, others politically mischievious, and yet others mere gossip. Certainly disguise interested the clerical writers, and so, from an early date, did romance literature as a whole: the borrowing of disguise themes from romance into the recorded life of a saintly king seems to have occurred in the first part of the twelfth century. That the literary debts were possibly reciprocated is borne out in the poets' likely borrowing from Giraldus' record of a disguised king. Again, it seems, romancers avoid monastic material, as they avoided popular tales, dealing with the female disguise of men. On the whole, however, much evidence points to a strong and early relationship between the monastic writers and the romance poets.

The probability of myth and ritual offering disguise material

has been discussed. The likelihood of indirect influence is strong: but the romances themselves offer evidence of either a sophisticated doubt as to the truth of, for example, magical shape-changing and disguise, or a total misunderstanding of, perhaps even a lack of interest in, the original meaning of the myths, and the rituals preceding them, which offered useful disguise material. The argument that romance writers deliberately endowed their work with pagan significance, or some kind of "sacredness", cannot, in the light of works such as Sir Gawain or William of Palerne, be readily accepted.

Finally, on sources, it has to be added that many of the so-called romance clichés were in fact part of the day-to-day life of the Middle Ages. The disguise of the knight in combat, the illegal changing of coats of arms, men and women travelling in disguise, and the recognition of the quality of a man by his skills and education rather than by his outward appearance - all these customs and experiences had had a life outside romance, some of them long before the romances were written, and some still occurring during the period of composition. These facts warn us again, as do the attitudes of some romance-writers towards the magic and the marvellous, that romance demands a careful definition, and that the word "romantic" should be used with great circumspection. Our own distance from, and unfamiliarity with, some of the commonplaces of medieval thought and living do not necessarily place aspects of the romance genre, including disguise, in an exclusive category which is removed from reality. This must be said with emphasis of the English romances in particular.

The third part of the discussion of the disguise theme gives a limited idea of the wide influence of the romances upon contemporary society and literary life, and upon the subsequent development of other literary forms.

Disguise games and shows helped to subdue and change the nature of the early tournament; and that these games and shows were derived from romance is evidenced by the dramatic "copies" of romance themes incorporated into the spectacles accompanying the jousts. That kings gained political support and unity from the introduction of romance and disguise into one of the most popular sports of the nobility is suggested by the enthusiasm with which monarchs, from Edward I to Henry VIII, supported and participated in these ostentiously romantic jousts and pageants.

The tournament having, by the middle of the fourteenth century in England, become almost a dramatic form, it was inevitable that the romantic themes, the properties, costumes, scenery and prepared verses for recitation should be transferred to the indoor festivities which had traditionally ended the larger tournaments. Disguise was carried along, too, joining comfortably with pre-existing traditions of courtly masking and Christmas mumming. Disguise had also found a near-cousin in love-allegory and in the increasingly popular moral allegory. All these elements conjoining, the elaborate form of the masque was evolved.

Outside the court, the romances were reviled by the scholarly and the religious for their immorality, but were loved, and read,

and watched as dramatic performances by almost all of the rest of English society until well into the seventeenth century. From the lists of romances printed from the end of the fifteenth century, and from what information is available of dramatised performances from the mid-fifteenth century onwards, it is remarkable, coincidental or not, that the longest-surviving and most popular works are those in which the disguise theme is pivotal or, at the least, is an important element.

As secular drama was evolving, dramatisations of the romances, as has already been mentioned, were being staged. At the same time, the Moral Interlude was becoming increasingly popular. Examination of individual texts shows that disguise was a strong element in these interludes, and that there was, in spite of the humanist view, a strong relationship between the moral concerns of the older romances and the newly-emerging dramas. The interludes leaned heavily on the romances for narrative framework and used such loans as the Christ-knight theme, knightly combat (in parodied form), and the wooing and quest themes. That specific disguise themes were borrowed from the romances can only be suggested by similarities of technique in serious and comic use of the theme by the romancers and the dramatists as examined in specific instances. With such evidence of the strength and longevity of romance influence, and the indebtedness in many other respects of the interlude to the older genre, it would be remarkable had not this most dramatic of devices suggested itself to the interlude dramatists from their reading of the romances.

An examination of a single theme from the romances has shown

how remarkably diversified, versatile, and in some cases, how sophisticated and philosophically serious they were. It has shown that the English writers, if not original in the strictest sense, endowed the metrical romances with a native character which differed from, and often bettered, the originals. With regard to some "conventions" of romance, evidence shows that the magic and the marvellous were, amongst the sophisticated at least, reserved to an imaginative understanding and expectation within the genre, rather than open to blind belief or to subconsciously inherited knowledge of the significance of such things, and that the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were little closer to the primitive origins of Man's philosophy than we are today. Similarly, many disguise "devices" appear in narratives less dramatically and unexpectedly than we might imagine, - being a reflection only of the contemporary experience of living. Finally, and perhaps most remarkable, is the vigour and breadth and lasting quality of the influence of the romances as seen through the disguise theme. Not only were they influential in their own life and times, but seemed to be carried through into literature centuries after their composition by the English poets, and provided inspiration for forms of literature quite removed from the original. Only the limits imposed upon this particular examination prevent further discussion of the full extent of that influence and inspiration.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DISGUISE MOTIF INDEX

Abbreviations for **titles of romances.**

I DISGUISE

II RECOGNITION

III NON-RECOGNITION

- a) Within Families
- b) Of friends, kings, etc.

IV SIGNS AND TOKENS

- a) Signs of mobility
- b) Signs of royalty
- c) Tokens of identification
- d) Tokens as proof of valour

APPENDIX A

DISGUISE MOTIF INDEX

Line references are given from the Editions listed in the Bibliography.

ABBREVIATIONS FOR TITLES OF ROMANCES

A Alexander A
AA Amis and Amiloun
AM Of Arthour and of Merlin
BH Beues of Hamptoun
E Emaré
EG Eger and Grime
ET The Erl of Tolous
F Firumbras
FB Floris and Blancheflur
G Generydes
GH The Gest Historiale of the Destruction of Troy
GW Guy of Warwick
H Havelok the Dane
HC Horn Childe and Maiden Rimenhild
I Ipomadon
KE King Edward and the Shepherd
KH King Horn
KyA Kyng Alisaunder
LB Libeaus Desconus
LF Lai le Freine
LL Lancelot of the Laik
LMA Le Morte Arthur
LST Lydgate's Siege of Thebes
LTB Lydgate's Troy Book
LaTB Laud Troy Book
MA Morte Arthure
ON Octavian (Northern)
OS Octavian (Southern)
RC The Taill of Rauf Coilyear
RL Richard Löwenherz
RS Robert of Sicily
SB The Sowdone of Babylone
SD Sir Degaré
SE Sir Eglamour
SF Sir Ferumbras
SG Sir Gowther
SGGK Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
SI Sir Isumbras
SO Sir Orfeo
SP Sir Perceval of Galles
SS The Seven Sages of Rome
ST Sir Tristrem
STr The Siege of Troy
TB The Tale of Beryn
TP Torrent of Portyngale
WP William of Palerne
YG Ywain and Gawain

I DISGUISE

as leper:
BH 3671 ff.,
as minstrel:
BH 3905 ff.,
as palmer:
BH 3893 ff.

Woman-disguise for warrior:
STr 1234 ff.

II RECOGNITION

Coat of arms, by:
SE 1000 ff., 1084 ff., 1162 ff., TP 2501 ff.

Direct revelation, by:
SGGK 2358 ff., GW 225 ff., 10168 ff., KE 1055 ff., KH 1133 ff., 1203 ff., LD 2219 ff., MA 2630 ff., RS 405 ff., SD 1056 ff., YG 3639 ff.

Face recognised:
ON 1742 ff.

Horse recognises hero:
BH 2175 ff.

Impostor recognised by missing finger:
EG 837 ff.

Scar on shoulder, by:
AA 2131 ff.,

Supernatural manifestation:
G 1219 ff.

III NON-RECOGNITION

a) Within Families

Brothers fight:
I 4429 ff., 4639 ff., 8475 ff., TP 2473 ff.,
meet:
ON 1698 ff., RS 281 ff.
slay one another:
I 4429 ff.
Father and Son:
combat:
SD 1025 ff., SE 1198 ff., TP 2263 ff.
father arms son:
LD 253 ff.
father does not recognise son at meeting:
ON 1186 ff.
Grandfather and grandson combat:
SD 499 ff.
Husband unrecognised by wife:
GW 10260 ff.
Mother and son:
about to marry:
SD 583 ff.
married:
SE 1108 ff.
do not recognise each other at meeting:
WP 3202 ff.
Son:
captures father:
TP 2263 ff.
unwittingly acts as father's champion:
ST 1174 ff.

b) Of Friends, Kings, etc.

Friends unwittingly fight:
SP 1397 ff., YG 3509 ff.
King unrecognised:
KE 22 ff., 638 ff., MA 955 ff., 1059 ff., RC 53 ff.,
RS 75 ff., SO 478 ff.

Prince unrecognised:
KH 1800 ff.
Unwitting fight with sought-for foe:
GW 177 ff.

IV SIGNS AND TOKENS

a) Signs of Nobility

Courtesy:
E 377 ff., 724 ff., 868 ff.,
Courtly skills:
E 377 ff., 724 ff., 868 ff., ST 473 ff.
Generosity:
I 482 ff., RC 757 ff.
Personal strength and beauty:
H 972 ff., 1060 ff.
Refined taste:
ON 649 ff., 706 ff., 755 ff.
Valuable possessions:
LF 137 ff., SD 188 ff.

b) Signs of Royalty

Physical signs:
cross on shoulder:
H 601 ff., 1260 ff., 2139 ff., SI 139 ff.
double king-mark:
E 502 ff.
Supernatural signs:
flame from mouth:
H 588 ff., 1260 ff., 2110 ff.

c) Tokens of Identification

Broken weapon:
SD 699 ff., ST 1567 ff.
Cup:
AA 313 ff., 2008 ff.
Garment:
LF 358 ff., SE 1117 ff.
Glove:
SD 188 ff., 646 ff.
Gold:
SO 623 ff.
Ring:
ET 385 ff., FB 141 ff., 517 ff., G 444 ff., 5309 ff.,
GW 10362 ff., HC 565 ff., I 8475 ff., SI 322 ff.,
SP 1848 ff., ST 221 ff., 778 ff., 3091 ff., TP 1903 ff.
ring dropped into cup:
HC 994 ff., KH 1241 ff.

d) Tokens as Proof of Valour

Boar's head:
BH 901 ff., SE 497 ff., SGGK 1614 ff.
Dragon's head:
GW 4140 ff., SE 933 ff.
Dragon's tongue:
BH 2711 ff., ST 1525 ff.
Giant's head:
AM 389 ff., GW 134 ff., LD 685 ff., 726 ff., 1486 ff.,
MA 1178 ff., ON 990 ff., OS 1189 ff., SE 334 ff.,
643 ff., TP 372 ff., 723 ff., 1051 ff.

APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE: THE TOURNAMENT, ROUND TABLES AND ROMANCE IMITATION

With descriptions of

SIX ROMANTIC AND DISGUISED JOUSTS OF THE EARLY SIXTEENTH CENTURY FROM THE WRITINGS OF EDWARD HALL

APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE: THE TOURNAMENT, ROUND TABLES AND ROMANCE IMITATION

1127 First reliable record of a tournament.

1130 Tournaments prohibited by Innocent III at Clermont; (also in 1148 by Eugenius III, and in 1139 and 1178 at Lateran Councils.).

1156 Crusaders' Tournament at Antioch.

1194 Richard I licences English tournaments.

1223 Jean d'Ibelin knights his son in Arthurian style.

1225 Freisach. Ulrich von Lichstenstein's tournament.

1226 Mercersberg. "Guy of Warwick" Joust.

1227 Ulrich von Lichtenstein's Venusfahrt.

1235 Round Table at Hesdin, Flanders, for knights pledging themselves to the Crusade.

1240 Ulrich's Artusfahrt.

1242 Henry III forbids Round Tables.

1252 Wallenden Round Table. Non-blunted weapon illegally used. Described in Matthew Paris as "not a tournament".

1254 Edward I's wedding feast and "tafelronde" with "spel" of Arthur.

1257 Round Table which "sat" at Warwick. (N.B. Loomis' date is 1259.)

1267 Edward I Statuta Armorum regularising the tournament.

1269 Valencia. Alfonso of Castile's Arthurian joust.

1278 First recorded romantic tournament at Ham under Count Robert of Artois.

1279 Roger Mortimer's first Round Table at Kenilworth.

1281 Mortimer's second Round Table (?).

1281 Round Table at Magdeburg.

1284 Edward I's Round Table at Caernarvonshire. Receives Arthur's crown to celebrate victory over Llewellyn.

1286 Round Table at Saragossa.

1288 The Fair of Boston; an Arthurian buhurt.

1290 Round Table in Barcelona.

1294 Duke of Brabant's Round Table at Bar-sur-Aube.

1300 Bruges Round Table in honour of Philippe le Bel.

1302 Edward I's Round Table at Falkirk.

1309 Edward II's tournament at Stepney including the "rex de vertbois".

1319 King John of Bohemia's Round Table at Prague.

1323 English tournaments banned unless licensed.

1328 Roger Mortimer's Round Tables at Bedford and Wigmore.

1331 Edward III's lists at Cheap. A "riding" prelude to the hastiludia.

1333 Battles of Halidon Hill and Crécy make tournament-style warfare obsolete.

1343 Smithfield hastiludia.

1344 Edward III's Round Table at Windsor. Round Table and Arthurian house specially built.

1345 Valenciennes "Alexander" Joust.

1347 Lichfield hastiludia in which the King is dressed as Thomas de Bradeston. Accounts of John Marreys, tailor, mention other hastiludes at Canterbury, Bury, Windsor and Eltham.

1374 Smithfield Joust. Alice Perrers' "Lady of the Sun" procession.

c.1405 The Castle of Perseverance performed: earliest Moral Interlude.

1416 Calais. Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick's Three-Day Tournament in red, white and green armour.

1449 René d'Anjou's Pas D'Armes de la Bergière.

1452-
1475 Tract on Arthurian Tournament: La forme des tournois au temps du Rois Uter et du Rois Artus.

SIX ROMANTIC AND DISGUISED JOUSTS OF THE EARLY SIXTEENTH CENTURY

From Edward Hall's The Lives of the Kings: Henry VIII, ed. Charles Whibley, London, 1904.

1510. Henry's Disguised Joust at Richmond

And the xii daie of Januarie, diverse gentelmen freshely appareled, prepared theim selfes to Juste, unknown to the Kinges grace, whereof, he being secretly informed, caused hymself, and one of his privie chambre, called William Compton to bee secretly armed, in the litle Parke of Richemond: and so came into the Justes, unknowen to al persones, and unloked for: The kyng ranne never openly before, and there were broken many staves, and greate praise geven to the twoo straungers, but specially to one, whiche was the kyng: . . . One persone there was, that knew the kyng, and cried, God save the kyng, with that, all the people were astonied, and then the kyng discovered himself to the greate comforte of all the people.

(Vol.I,p.14.)

1511. Jousts of Les Quater Chivalers de la forrest Salvigne.

Then came next Marques Dorset and syr Thomas Bulleyn, lyke two pilgrems from saint James, in tabardes of blacke Velvet, with palmers hattes on their helmettes, wyth long Jacobs staves in their handes, their horse trappers of blacke Velvet, their taberdes, hattes, and trappers set with scaloppe schelles of fine golde, and strippes of blacke Velvet, every strip set with a scalop shell, their servauntes al in blacke Satyn, with scalop shelles of gold in their breastes.

(Vol.I,p.22 f.)

1512. The Jousts at Greenwich

Then sodainly with greate noyse of Trompettes entered sir Thomas Knevet in a Castle of Cole blacke, and over the castell was written, The dolorous Castle, . . .

(Vol.I.p.54.)

1514. The Tilt of the Hermits.

In the moneth of Maye the kyng and the newe Duke of Suffolke were defenders at the Tilt against al commers the kynge was in a scopelary mantel and hat of clothe of silver and like a whit hermite, and the duke appareled like a black hermite al of black velvet, both their berdes wer of Damaske silver, and when they had ridden about the Tilt and shewed them seles to the quene, then they threw of their apparel and sent it to the ladies for a larges, . . .

(Vol.I.p.120.)

1514. The Dauphin's Joust at Paris

The Dolphin brought a man secretly, which in al the court of Fraunce was the tallest and the strongest man, and he was an Almayne and put him in the place of an other person to have had the duke of Suffolk rebuked. The same great Almayne came to the barres fiersly with face hyd, because he would not be knowen . . .

(Vol.I,p.127.)

1527. The Débat and Barriers at Greenwich

. . these two persones plaied a dialog theffect wherof was whether riches were better then love, and when they could not agre upon a conclusion, eche called in thre knightes, all armed, . . (These fight at the barriers with three others.) . . then came in an olde man with a silver berd, and he concluded that love and riches, both be necessarie for princes.

(Vol.II,p.87.)

APPENDIX C

1ST JANUARY. 17 EDWARD III. 1344. (R.Pat.17 EDW.III.p.2.m.2.)

THE TEXT OF LETTERS OF SAFE-CONDUCT TO THE WINDSOR HASTILUDES

APPENDIX C

LETTERS OF SAFE-CONDUCT. 1ST JANUARY. 17 EDWARD III.1344

Rex universis et singulis comitibus, baronibus, vicecomitibus, ballivis, ministris, et aliis fidelibus suis tam infra libertates quam extra, ad quos, &c. salutem. Sciatis quod cum ad recreationem et solatium hominum militarium qui in armorum exercitio delectantur, habere disposuerimus hastiludia et justas generales, apud castrum nostrum de Wyndesore, die Lunae proximo post festum Sancti Hilarii proximo futurum; Nos, volentes securitati omnium et singulorum, cujuscumque regionis sive nationis fuerint, illuc ex hac causa tunc venire volentium, providere, suscepimus omnes et singulos, tam milites, domicellos, ac scutiferos, cujuscumque regionis vel loci fuerint, sic venire volentes, servientes et bona eorum quaecumque, illuc veniendo, ibidem morando, et exinde ad propria redeundo, in salvum et securum conductum nostrum, ac protectionem et defensionem nostras speciales: Et ideo vobis mandamus quod omnibus et singulis, sic venientibus, &c. pro ut in caeteris de conductu literis. In cujus, &c. usque ad octabas Purificationis Beatae Marie Virginis proximo futuras, duraturus. Teste Rege, apud Ditton primo die Januarii.

APPENDIX D

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISGUISING AND THE MASQUE

APPENDIX D

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISGUISING AND THE MASQUE

1283 The first Court of Love. Italy.
1285. First recorded disguising. Scotland.
1337 Costumes made for Edward II's Christmas mumming.
1377 Commons' mumming for Richard II.
1378 Paris. Enactment of *The Conquest of Jerusalem*.
1389 Paris. Enactment of *The Siege of Troy*.
1400 *Cour Amoureuse* founded in France.
c.1430 Lydgate's "mommers disguysed".
1431 Lydgate's allegorical pageant for Henry VI.
1448 Valenciennes. Court of Love.
1494 Westminster Wassail and Disguising.
1501 Arthur and Katharine's Wedding Tournament.
1501 William Cornish introduces early masque.
1509 Westminster mumming for Henry VIII.
1515 Eltham. Indoor "castle assault".
1517 Greenwich. Allegorical joust and disguising.
1519 Newhall disguising.
1519 *The Nature of the Four Elements*; an interlude provides for disguising.
1522 Windsor disguising.
1524 Greenwich Joust.
1526 John Roo's Gray's Inn disguising.
1526 William Crane's masque with *débat*, tourney and pageant.

APPENDIX E

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES SHOWING THE INCIDENCE OF ROMANCES AMONGST DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES AND PRINTED LITERATURE DURING THE LATE PLANTAGENET, TUDOR AND ELIZABETHAN PERIODS

ROMANCE DISGUISINGS AND SETTINGS FOR TILTS
ROMANCE DRAMATISATIONS
THE PRINTING OF CHIVALRIC NARRATIVES
MORAL INTERLUDES CONTAINING COMPARISONS WITH ROMANCE DISGUISE THEMES

APPENDIX E

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES SHOWING THE INCIDENCE OF ROMANCES AMONGST DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES AND PRINTED LITERATURE DURING THE LATE PLANTAGENET, TUDOR AND ELIZABETHAN PERIODS

Romance Disguisings and Settings for Tilts

1510 13th February. Disguise and Tilt. The Four Chevaliers of the Forest Salvigny.
1511 January. Disguise and Tilt. The Castle Dangerous.
1511 14th February. Disguise. The Garden of Pleasure.
1513 January. Disguise. A Rich Mount.
1513 May. Disguise and Tilt. The Tilt of the Hermits.
1513 June. " " " The Dolorous Castle.
1515 January. Disguise. The Place Perilous.
1515 January. " The Eltham Pageant of a Castle.
1517 January " The Garden of Esperance. Cornish ?.
1518 Disguise. A Mask of Palmers.
1522 March. Disguise and Tilt. The Conquest of Lady Scorn.
1555 Guisnes. The Joust of Robard the Devil.

Romance Dramatisations

1444 30th June. Eglemour and Degrebelle. St.Alban's.
1444 August. "a knight cleped fflorence". Bermondsey.
1529 Interlude of Kinge Robert of Scissilie. High Cross, Chester.
1534 The Play of Plasidas. Braintree.
1571-2 Paris and Vienne.
1576-7 The Irish Knight.
1577 The Historie of the Solitarie Knight.
1578-9 The Rape of the Second Helen.
1579 The Knight of the Burning Rock.

1593-4 Huon of Bordeaux. Henslowe.
1595 Enterlude of Valentyne. "
1597 Uther Pendragon. "
1598 Valentine and Orson. "
1598 The Life and Death of King Arthur. Henslowe.
1598 Tristram of Lyons. "
1599 Clyomon and Clamydes.
1603 The Four Sons of Aymon . Henslowe.
1610-11 The Knight of the Burning Pestle.
1618 Guy of Warw ick.
1624 The Four Sons of Aymon. Henslowe.
1639 Guy of Warwick.
1661 The Tragical Historie of Guy of Warwick.

The Printing of Chivalric Narratives

1475-91 Caxton:
Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye.
History of Jason.
Le Morte Darthur.
Life of Charles the Great.
Fierabras.
Paris and Vienne.
Blanchardine and Eglantine.
The Four Sons of Aymon.

1491-1535 Wynkyn de Worde:
The History of King Ponthus. 1511.
Helyas Knight of the Swan. 1512.
Oliver of Castile. 1518.
William of Palerne. 1520.
Huon of Bordeaux . 1534.
Robert the Devil. Undated.
Valentine and Orson. Undated.

1509-28 **Ascribed to Wynkyn, Undated:**

Sir Bevis.
Sir Degaré.
Sir Eglamour.
Guy of Warwick.
Ipomydon.
Richard Coeur de Lion.
Generydes.
Sir Isumbras.
Sir Triamour.
Torrent of Portyngale.

1495-1530 **Richard Pynson:**

Guy of Warwick.
Sir Bevis.
Paris and Vienne.
The Jeast of Sir Gawayne.
Arthur of Little Britain.

1548-69 **William Copland:**

Sir Degaré.	)
Sir Eglamour.	)
Sir Isumbras.	)
The Squire of Low Degree.	) Metrical
Bevis of Hampton.	)
Guy of Warwick.	)
Sir Triamour.	)
The Knight of Courtesy.	)
The Recuile of the Histories of Troie.	)
The Four Sons of Aymon.	)
King Arthur.	) Prose
Valentine and Orson.	)
Helyas, the Knight of the Swan.	)

1557-60 John King:

The Jeast of Sir Gawayne.) 1557-8. Licences
Sir Lanwell,) taken out.

Sir Degaré.) Printed
The Squire of Low Degree.) c.1560.

1558 and 1569 Thomas Marsh, John Tysdale and John Alde :

took out licences for Bevis of Hampton.

1568-69 John Purfoot:

Richard.) Licences
Generydes.) taken out.

Before 1572 John Cawood:

Guy of Warwick.

Before 1575 John Walley:

Sir Eglamour.

Moral Interludes Containing Comparisons with Romance Disguise Themes.

Mid-14th Century	The Pride of Life.
c. 1405	The Castle of Perseverance.
c. 1460	Wisdom.
1465-70	Mankind.
1490-1500	Fulgens and Lucres.

1495	Everyman.
1508-22	Mundus et Infans.
1513	Hickscorner.
1515	Magnificence.
1516	Troilus and Pander. Court Chapel romantic interlude.
1517	The Nature of the Four Elements.
1520	The Interlude of Youth.
1527	Calisto and Melibea. Romantic interlude.
1529	The Chester Kinge Robert.
1538 ?	King John.
c.1539	The Temptation of Our Lord.
1539-47	Wit and Science.
1540-52	Three Estates.
1553	Ralph Roister Doister.
1553	Respublica.
1560	Enough is as Good as a Feast.
1567	The Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom.
1576	Common Conditions. Romantic interlude.
1595	The Enterlude of Valentyne.

NOTE

T.W.Craik (The Tudor Interlude), Robert Potter (The English Morality Play), Peter Happé (Tudor Interludes), Mark Eccles (The Macro Plays), Schell & Shuchter (English Morality Plays and Moral Interludes) and Harbage & Schoenbaum (Annals of English Drama) do not always agree on the dating for these plays. The dates suggested above are a matter for conjecture, and must therefore be regarded as approximate.

NOTES TO THE TEXT

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

References to the romances are from the Editions listed in the Bibliography.

Section (a)

1. For a discussion of the significance of women in romance see Joan Ferrante, Woman as Image, Columbia University Press, 1975.
2. Joseph Hall's notes to Horn Childe suggest borrowings from Sir Tristrem and possibly Amis and Amiloun.
3. Gottfried von Strassburg:Tristan, ed. A.T.Hatto, Harmondsworth, 1960, p.333.
4. See Sir Beues, ll.2058 ff., and Guy of Warwick, ll. 10260 ff..
5. Sir Orfeo, ed. A.J.Bliss, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1966, p.xliii.
6. See the Prologue, l.12:
   "Mest o loue, for-soþe þai beþ."
7. See Bliss, op.cit. (note 5).
8. The condition of lepers in relation to the law is dealt with in Chapter 5, section (e).
9. Enid Welsford, The Fool, London, 1935, esp. p.315.
10. R.W.Hanning, The Individual in Twelfth-Century Romance, Yale University Press, 1977. Chapter 3 of this book discusses the meaning of engin with reference to the Roman d'Aneas, Erec, Cligés and Ipomedon. Much of what he says applies also to the English romances.
11. Also the echo of the Prodigal Son in the King's wanderings in the wilderness, which would add to it the significance of atonement for wrong-doing (almost certainly wrong in this context). Even Bliss glosses rinde as "husks", instead of the more usual "bark", as though to endorse this. See l.260.
12. As H.L.Savage,"The Significance of the Hunting Scenes in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight", Journal of English and Germanic Philology XXVII (1928), pp.1-15. See also J.Speirs, Medieval English Poetry, London,

1957, p.236, and A.C.Spearing, The Gawain-Poet, Cambridge University Press, 1970, pp.212 ff..

13. Morgan la Fay's identity is also concealed in the person of the "auncian lady". The disguise is therefore double, - the disguise of the instigator of the plot and her disguise of her "agent". See ll. 2456 ff..
14. Imperfect disguise also occurs in Kyng Alisaunder, ll. 7660 ff., and Richard, ll.663 ff..
15. Cleveland, 1969. See p.117. The discussion of identity and disguise in this book suggests remarkable similarities between modern thriller and medieval disguise technique. Harper identifies what he terms "cover" as "the true sense of the crisis in the thriller". See p. 115 ff..
16. R.W.Hanning, op.cit. (note 10), discusses some effects of the passing of time on the identity of the romance hero. See Chapter VI.
17. The inspirational intent in Sir Guy is argued in V.B. Richmond's The Popularity of the Middle English Romance, Ohio, 1975; see esp. Chapter VI. Miss Richmond also cites G.R.Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, New York, revd.ed. 1961, esp. p.15.

Section (b)

1. See the discussion in this chapter, section (a), ii, The Nature of Society.
2. The Tale of Beryn describes Geffrey's pretended appearance, speech and behaviour at ll.1915-34. Lines 6223-82 in Ipomadon are devoted to the hero's appearance alone, in the guise of a fool. Ipomadon's speech and the court's reaction to the spectacle only begin at l.6282.
3. The King in this romance is supposedly Edward III. His father, Edward II, born at Caernarvon, is traditionally said to have been presented to the rebellious Welsh

as their king. Edward III's mother was Isabella of France. His wife was Philippa of Hainault, mother of the future Black Prince, Edward.

4. French & Hale note at the end of their edition (see Bibliography) that analogous versions have Edward knight the shepherd and reward him well. See F.& H. p.985.
5. This romance is listed in J.Burke Severs (ed.), A Manual of Writings in Middle English 1050-1500, New Haven, Conn., 1967. Its relationship to the lay of John the Reeve is discussed in Fasicule I, p.97. Severs omits King Edward from his lists and commentaries. French & Hale op.cit. (note 4), suggest the end of the fourteenth century for the composition of King Edward. Herrtage, the editor of Rauf Coilyear, (E.E.T.S.e.s.39, London, 1882), thinks John the Reeve was written between 1377 and 1461.
6. Other comparisons between this poem and Sir Gawain can be observed. For example, i) the stanza form and alliteration; the occasional incorporation of the main body of the last line of the stanza into the first line of the next stanza: ii) phrases reminiscent of Pearl and Sir Gawain, e.g. l. 626, "Among the proudest in preis, plesand in paie.": iii) elaborate description, as of Charlemagne's hall, ll. 664 ff.: iv) strong and repeated religious allusions apart from the Christian/Saracen element, e.g. reference to "Yule-day" and "Yule-tide"; Roland's resentment at his being prevented from worship on Christmas Day, and his return to Paris after " hie Mes was done" (ll.404 ff.); and more phrases than usual using the names of God and Mary.
7. He repeats this treatment of the King in ll. 149 ff..
8. J.Burke Severs, op.cit. (note 5), discusses, in Fasicule I, p.128, the different degrees to which O.N. and O.S. adhere to the French source.
9. A rare instance of imperfect disguise. See Le Morte Arthur, this chapter, section (a), iii, The Testing of Self.

10. See Chapter 7 on the influence of romance disguise in early Tudor drama.
11. James H.Blessing makes this observation in his examination of William of Palerne and Guillaume de Palerne, in A Comparison of Some Middle English Romances with the Old French Antecedents, Stanford University Dissertation, 1959.
12. H.Michelant (ed.), Guillaume de Palerne (Société des Anciens Textes Francais), Paris, 1876.
13. Cf.M. A.Owings, The Arts in the Middle English Romances, New York, 1952, p.7 ff.. He comments:

> . . in the English romances the portrayal of the arts is for the most part realistic . . Where art representations in the English and French romances are compared, we do not find a single instance where the fantastic has been amplified from the French, but we do find several in which it is minimized or omitted altogether.This difference in treatment would seem to indicate that sometimes . . the English romances tend to be less romantic.

Section (c)

1. See this chapter (b), The Comic Use of Disguise.
2. Ibid.
3. French & Hale (see Bibliography; King Edward) suggest the end of the fourteenth century for composition (p. 9 49).
4. French & Hale, op.cit., note at l. 365 that "white skin was a mark of gentility". The single reference to white skin in this romance could arguably allude to the pallor of drunkenness. Cf. The Manciple's Prologue (in The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F.N.Robinson, London & Oxford University Press, 1957, 2nd edition), p.224,l.20, "This Cook, that was ful pale and no thyng reed, . . "; also l.30, "For in good feith, thy visage is ful pale, . . "; and l.55, "So unweeldy was this sory palled gost . "

5. Morte Arthure, ll.955-1034.
6. As, for example, Horn (in King Horn), whose noble attributes are discussed in this chapter, section (a), ii, The Nature of Society.
7. Gottfried von Strassburg: Tristan, ed. A.T.Hatto, Harmondsworth, 1960, p.71.
8. An examination of this episode and its social significance forms the greater part of Chapter 5, section (d), The Courtly Arts.
9. Gottfried, op.cit. (note 7), p.79.
10. Ibid., pp.143 f..
11. Cf. Emaré's skill in sewing on silk, (ll. 377 ff., 727 ff. and 730 ff.).
12. Also the Southern version at ll. 697 ff., 793 ff., 729 ff. and 845 ff. respectively, discussed in this chapter, section (b), The Comic Use of Disguise.
13. The parallel version of this episode is in Octavian (S), ll.1279 ff..

Section (d)

1. See this chapter, section (a), iii, The Testing of Self.
2. On the relat ionship between Sir Gowther and Robert of Sicily, and a discussion of antecedents and sources, see J.Burke Severs (ed.), A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500, New Haven, Conn., 1967, Fasicule I, pp. 142, 171, 296 and 331.
3. The Lady invites the attention of the supernatural by her desperate prayer for a child:

> Scho preyd to God and Mare mylde
> Schuld gyffe hur grace to have a chyld,
> On what maner scho ne roghth.
>
> (ll.61 ff.).

4. Cf. the behaviour of Rauf Coilyear; see this chapter, section (c), Disguise as Social Comment.
5. Gowther and Robert both eat with the hounds. Gowther's penance is exact in that it requires that he eat only "That þou revus of howndus mothe." (S.G.l. 293). Robert is fed with the hounds as part of his reduction

of status; this is decreed by the angel when he is also clothed like an ape and barbered like a fool (R.S. ll 157-67).

"Houndes, how so hit falle,
Schulen eten wiþ þe in halle;"
(R.S. ll.163 f.)

6. Interpretation of the poem within the poem also occurs at ll. 25 ff., 195 ff., and 290 ff.. Robert's own interpretation comes at ll.335 ff..
7. In this respect Sir Gowther could be termed "mainstream". The moral and the marvellous, often with sexual interest added, occurs in many English romances. Closest to Sir Gowther in this respect would be Sir Isumbras. This romance differs, however, in that Isumbras' penance is not a life which defines his sin.
8. Dieter Mehl, The Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, London, 1968, pp.42 ff.. Mehl agrees broadly with D.M.Hill, "The Structure of Sir Orfeo", Medieval Studies XXIII (1961), pp. 136-53, insofar as the King's life in the wilderness can be read as a symbol. (Hill, however, goes much further in claiming madness and hallucinatory experiences for the King. In citing parallel examples, he does not find a similar occurrence in an English contemporary work. Nor does he extract evidence from the poet to suggest that the visits from the Otherworld are " an objectifying of a mental state").

Section (e)

1. Discussion of this poem deals with what is available in Auchinleck MS. W.4.1., i.e. up to Folio 263. In Wattie's edition (see Bibiliography) this would be lines 1-340.
2. Introduction, The Middle English"Lai le Freine" (see Bibliography: Editions). The question of identity is not included in her discussion.
3. Marie de France: Lais, ed. A.Ewart, Oxford, 1944, repr. 1976. See Le Fresne, pp.35 ff..
4. Cf. the ballad Fair Annie (to which Ewart refers in

notes to Le Fresne), in which Annie's high birth is emphasised very specifically:

"The Earl of Wemyss was my father,
The Countess of Wemyss was my mither,
Young Elinor she was my sister dear,
And Lord John he was my brother."

(Oxford Book of Ballads, ed. A. Quiller-Couch, Oxford, 1910.pp. 179-84).

5. Ewart glosses line 294, "That might yet prove to her liking (advantage).", implying that le Fresne's concern is specifically social rather than a point of reassurance.
6. Cf. le Freine's "conflict" with her sister le Codre.
7. Auchinleck MS. 19.2.1. ends as the father agrees to accompany Degaré to his mother. Bodleian MS. Rawlinson F.34. re-unites the family and marries Degaré's mother to the faëry knight.
8. A.S.Cook, in his edition of Sir Eglamour (New York, 1911), examines sources and analogues of this romance in common with the romances of Torrent of Portyngale, Sir Isumbras and Octavian. Similarly E.Adam, (ed., Torrent of Portyngale, E.E.T.S.e.s.51, London, 1887), suggests they are but variations on a theme. Dissimilarities between S.E. and T.P. in respect of unknown identity, however, make it worth looking at these romances separately.
9. See Chapter 5, section (b), Arms and Armour.
10. Ibid.
11. Cf. Chaucer's Knight's Tale (Robinson's 2nd edition), l.1524:

"For al day meeteth men at unset stevene."

12. Adam, op.cit. (note 8), attributes the authorship of T.P.to a monk rather than a minstrel, citing many examples of religious influence in the romance. This would explain the fostering of one twin with St. Anthony and the religious intent attached to Torrent's journey to Jerusalem. The romance as a whole tends to treat events more seriously than S.E.; for example, the kindly but morally corrective purpose behind Torrent's imprisonment by his son.

"Sir", he said, "haue no care,
Thou shalte lyve and welfare,
But lower ys thy pryde! "
(11.2278 ff.)

13. J.B.Severs, (A Manual of the Writings in Middle English), does not connect Libeaus Desconus with Sir Perceval other than to remark:

"The account of Libeaus' enfances
resembles similar stories attached
to Perceval and other Arthurian heroes."

See Fasicule I, p.69.

14. Interesting for the fact that Emaré has married without telling her husband her truename.

15. The Romance of Emaré (see Bibiliography), Introduction, p.xlvii.

16. Rickert, op.cit. (note 15), gives details of comparisons and parallels between E., S.E. and T.P.

17. Ibid., Introduction.

18. Lai le Freine, 11.229 ff.:

And for it was in an asche yfounde,
Sche cleped it Frain in that stounde:

19. As an example of the importance attached to names in other romances, see the discussion of the significance of Amourant in Amis and Amiloun, this chapter, section (a),i, The Testing of Love.

20. The occurrence of undisclosed identity within families, although not of central importance, is found thus in other romances:
i) brothers: Ipomadon, 11. 4429 ff., Octavian (N), 11.1698 ff., Robert of Sicily, 11. 281 ff..
ii) son/father: Octavian (N), 11.1186 ff., Sir Tristrem, 11.1174 ff..
iii) mother/son: William of Palerne, 11.3202 ff..
iv) wife/husband: Guy of Warwick, 11. 10260 ff..

Section (f)

1. Examples of this use of disguise from romances other than those cited are few. They are: Octavian (N), 11.1501 ff.; Richard, 11. 591 ff., 5222 ff.; and The Seven Sages of Rome, 11. 2638 ff..

2. Leo, Archpresbyter of Naples, Nativitas et Victoria Alexandri Magni, c. 950 A.D.. See Notes to the Text in Alexander A , ed. F.P.Magoun (see Bibliography)
3. Sir Ferumbras is dated by Herrtage c. 1377; The Sowdone (Severs) c.1400; and Firumbras (O'Sullivan) is placed in the second half of the fifteenth century. The later the version of this disguise episode is, the more expanded and elaborate it becomes. This goes against the general tendency among English romancers to pare down and omit passages from sources and antecedent versions.
4. See the examination of this episode in Kyng Alisaunder, this chapter, section (b), The Comic Use of Disguise.
5. Cf. Gottfried von Strassburg: Tristan, ed. A.T.Hatto, Harmondsworth, 1960, pp.332 f..
6. Ibid.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

References to the romances are from the Editions listed in the Bibliography.

Section (a)

1. W.W.Skeat, (ed.), Alliterative Alexander (in The Romance of William of Palerne; see Bibliography. F.P.Magoun, (ed.), Alexander A Text, Cambridge, Mass., 1929.
2. See Magoun, op.cit. pp.22 f. and 40 ff..
3. The whole escape passage, describing the manner and means of the necromancer's disguise (11.542-54), is reproduced and compared with the Latin text in Chapter 1, section (f), Disguise:the Stock Situation. See discussion of disguise in Alexander A and Kyng Alisaunder.
4. See also Richard. His mother, Cassodorien, had a revulsion against the Sacraments (11.185 ff.), and eventually disappeared through the high window of a church (11.219 ff.). Godefroy de Bouillon, famous for his conduct in the First Crusade in 1098, was also reputed to be descended from a swan-maiden. He is the hero of the Knight-of-the-Swan romances, for example, Chevelere Assigne.
5. See Chapter 2, section (d), The Disguised Life, on the use of the disguise theme in Robert of Sicily.
6. Ibid.
7. J.B.Severs, (ed), A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500, New Haven Conn., 1967, Fas icule I, pp.171 ff..
8. Lillian H.Hornstein, "King Robert of Sicily: Analogues and Origins", PMLA. LXXIX (1964), pp. 13-21. Cf. also the story of Der Nackte König.
9. J.B.Severs, op.cit (note 7), p.171.
10. A Middle English Version of the Gesta Romanorum, ed. Karl I. Sandred, Uppsala, 1971; see Introduction. Also S.J.Herrtage in The Early English Versions of the Gesta Romanorum, E.E.T.S.e.s.33, London, 1879,

Introduction.

11. Gesta Romanorum MS. BM. Harleian 73333, from Herrtage's edition, op.cit.(note 10).
12. Laura Hibbard, (Medieval Romance in E ngland, New York, 1924, revd.1960), and MacEdward Leach, (ed., Amis and Amiloun; see Bibliography), would not agree with this classification. But see V.B.Richmond's more recent reading of the poem as a didactic Christian work in The Popularity of the Middle English Romance, Ohio, 1975, pp.92 ff..
13. See Laura Hibbard, op.cit., pp. 69 ff..
14. See M.Dominica Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1963, pp. 115-21. Except for one or two important instances of departure from the A-N. source by the English redactor, alluded to and discussed in this chapter, the two versions are so close that they must necessarily be taken together. For the purposes of this discussion, their extraction of material, their philosophy and intent are almost identical.
15. MacEdward Leach, op.cit. (note 12), Appendix A.
16. J.Bédier, "Les Chansons de Geste et les Routes d'Italie", Romania XXXVI (1885),pp. 337-56. The chanson can be said to have some historical connection with the traditional battle at Mortara, Lombardy, where a certain Amis and Amile were said to have been killed.
17. MacEdward Leach, op.cit. (note 12), Introduction, p.xvi.
18. Ibid.
19. In the English version: Owaines in the A-N. version. See Chapter 1, section (a), The Testing of Love.
20. Ibid.
21. V.B.Richmond, op.cit. (note 12), observes these lines as an example of the literary finesse of the English poet. See p.99.
22. The self-proliferating quality of love and loyalty is found in other English romances, e.g. the Steward's welcome of the disguised Orfeo; see Chapter 1, section (a),ii, The Nature of Society. The sublimation of love,with charity as the result, is also not uncommon.

Cf. Rymenhild in King Horn and Felice in Guy of Warwick.

23. The Romance of Emaré, ed.E.Rickert (see Bibliography), Introduction, p. xl.
24. The Wife's Lament in Three Old English Elegies, ed. R.F.Leslie, Manchester University Press, 1961, p.47 ff.
25. See Rickert, op.cit., pp.xxxix ff..
26. Historia Ecclesiae, IV, 523.
27. For other versions see Rickert, op.cit., (note 23), pp. xxxvi ff..
28. Rickert op.cit., p.xxxix.
29. Ibid.; p.xlvii, n.3 contains references for verbal comparisons and parallels in Emaré, S.Eglamour and Torrent.
30. S.J.Herrtage, op.cit. (note 10), Introduction,p.vii.
31. Rickert, op.cit. (note 23), p. xlviii, n.2.
32. F.E.Richardson, (ed), Sir Eglamour of Artois (see Bibliography), Notes.
33. Richardson, op.cit., Notes and Appendix III: and E. Adam, (ed.), Torrent of Portyngale (see Bibliography), pp.xxi-xxxi.
34. Aspects of similarity and dissimilarity between the two romances are discussed in Chapter 1, section (e), The Identity Romances.
35. See Chapter 1, section (e).
36. Maldwyn Mills, (ed.), Six Middle English Romances, London, 1973, p.212.
37. Ibid., Introduction, p.xviii.
38. The Legend of Job in the Middle Ages, Harvard University Press, 1979. See also M.J.Allen's Ph.D. Thesis, London, 1970, The Book of Job in Middle English Literature, 1100-1500.
39. Book of Job, II, 12.
40. E.Adam, op.cit. (note 33), p.xxv, suggests that Octavian is a sophisticated and elaborate version of Sir Isumbras. At the same time, though, he suggests that the two poems might be independently composed by two poets who knew St.Eustache. He does not consider Octavian's relationship with Emaré.

Section (b)

1. Giraldus Cambrensis: Opera, ed, J.S.Brewer, London, 1873: see vol.IV, Speculum Ecclesiae, pp.213-15. On this and other popular versions of the theme, see F.J.Child, The English and Scottish Popular Ballads, New York, 1957, esp. vol.V, pp.67 ff..
2. F.J.Child, op.cit.; see The Shepherd and the King licensed to Richard Jones, 25th September, 1578.
3. All mentioned by Child, op.cit., pp.67 ff..
4. This is discussed in Chapter 1, section (c), Disguise as Social Comment.
5. A Dictionary of British Folk Tales, London, 1971, Part B, vol.II, pp.66 ff..
6. Ibid., p.68.
7. See W.H.French & C.B.Hale, The Middle English Metrical Romances , New York, 1930, revd.1964, p.949.
8. E.g. the three-day tournament at Cheapside in 1331, and the disguising at Smithfield in 1375. Edward's connection with pageant and disguise is discussed in Chapter 6.
9. Hoccleve's Works, ed. F.J.Furnivall, E.E.T.S.e.s.72, London, 1897, vol.III, The Regement of Princes. The possibility of this tradition of disguise finding its way into Henry V, Act IV, Scene 1 is a real one in the absence of anything similar in Shakespeare's usual historical sources.
10. See Hilda Johnstone,"Eccentricities of Edward II", English Historical Review XLVIII (1933),pp 264-7. See also Miss Johnstone's Edward of Caernarvon 1284-1307, Manchester University Press, 1946, pp.17 ff. and pp. 129 f.. In this last she translates William of Malmesbury's comment: "Had he devoted as much toil to arms as he gave to rustic arts, England would have prospered and his name rung through the whole earth." (Vita Edwardii Monarchi cujusdam Malmesberiensis, ed. J.A.Giles, London, 1847, vol.II,p.192.).

11. In James MacKinnon, The History of Edward III, London, 1900. pp.15 f..
12. Katharine Briggs, op.cit. (note 5), p.78; she cites the Somersetshire Archaeological Journal, XVIII, ii, pp. 17-21 for the story of his marriage to Aldeburgh.
13. See Briggs, op.cit., p.134.
14. Numerous examples of disguise as messengers, chamberlains, lepers, pedlars, minstrels and others are to be found here in Appendix A.
15. Examples of women disguised as men in the romances are found in Arthur and Merlin, ll.1347 ff., - a woman as a chamberlain; Sir Beues, ll. 3893 ff., 3671 ff. and 3905 ff., - Josian as a palmer, a leper and a minstrel; William of Palerne, ll.1704 ff., - Melior as a boy.
16. De Gestis Herwardii, edd. and transs. S.H.Miller & W.D.Sweeting, Peterborough, 1895, Part VI. The author of this account claims as his authority Leofric of Brun, a priest in Hereward's service. For dating and origins of this earliest of accounts see D.Stedman, The Story of Hereward, London, 1909. See below * .
17. W.H.Schofield discusses other possible analogues of the disguise-at-the-wedding theme in "The Story of Horn and Rimenhild", PMLA.XVIII (1903), pp.1-83. He draws attention to Geoffrey of Monmouth's account (Historia Regum Britanniae, XII.7.) of Brian's attempt, in disguise, on the life of Edwin's magician, and the rescue of his abducted sister. There is no wedding feast, however, and no ring-and-cup episode. The disguise re-appears in Wace, ll.14693 ff., and La3amon, MS. Caligula, ll.15361 ff.. Schofield also discusses the saga of Gunnlaug Serpent-tongue, a tenth-century historical Norseman whose story includes a rescue at a wedding: there is no ring-and-cup episode here either.
18. Sir Tristrem,ll.3168 ff. has the parallel account of this disguise. On the links between King Horn and Tristan see W.H.Schofield, op.cit.,pp.23,29 and 50-61; M.K.Pope, "The Romance of Horn and King Horn", Medium Aevum XXV (1956), pp.164 ff.; and M.D.Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background , Oxford Clarendon

Press, 1963,pp.101 ff..

19. Gottfried von Strassburg: Tristan, ed. A.T.Hatto, Harmondsworth, 1960, pp.332 f..

* Addendum to n.16

Parts XXIV and XXV of De Gestis Herwardii contain the disguise of Hereward as a potter and as a fisherman spying in the King's court.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

References to the romances are from the Editions listed in the Bibliography.

1. See Chapter 2, section (b), Popular Tales.
2. Asser's Life of Alfred, A.D.878, in J.A.Giles, (ed.), Six Old English Chronicles, London, 1878, p.60.
3. William of Malmesbury: De Gestis Regum Anglorum, ed. J.A.Giles, London, 1847, Bk.II, ch.IV, A.D.878-890.
4. Ibid., Bk II, ch.VI, A.D. 927.
5. Geoffrey of Monmouth: Historia Regum Britanniae, ed. A.Griscom, London, 1829, IX, i.
6. Wace: Roman de Brut, ed. I.Arnold, Paris, 1938-40, ll. 9336 ff..
7. Laȝamon's Brut, edd. G.L.Brook & R.F.Leslie, E.E.T.S. o.s.277, London, 1978, ll.20305-38.
8. Saxonis Gesta Denorum, edd. C.Knabe & P.Hermann, Copenhagen, 1931-57, l.3, pp. 39 ff..
   On the antiquity and distinction of harpers see Constance Bullock-Davies, Menestrellorum Multitudo, University of Wales Press, 1978, pp.27 f..
9. Minstrel disguise occurs in the following romances: Sir Beues, ll.3905 ff.; King Horn, ll.1461 ff.; Sir Orfeo, ll.225 ff., 379 ff., and 513 ff..
10. E.g. Richard's parentage: see Chapter 2, section (a), note 4.
11. Ralph, abbot of Coggeshall 1207-1218, gives much detail on the Third Crusade. His account of Richard's adventures after leaving the Holy Land probably originates in a verbal account by Anselm, Richard's chaplain, who accompanied him on the voyage home. Parts of the chronicle relative to Richard's captivity have an inserted appeal to Anselm's authority in the margin (MS.Cotton Vespasian 8.x.). There is also a French account in Ernoul's continuation of William of Tyre's Historia de rebus transmarinis: see English History by Contemporary Writers: the Crusade of Richard I, ed. T.A.Archer, London, 1900, pp.335 ff..

12. In Chronicum Anglicanum, ed. J.Stevenson, London, 1875, p.51.
13. An actual case of an individual betraying his own disguise is cited by M.D.Knowles in "Archbishop Becket :a Character Study", Proceedings of the British Academy XXXV (1949),p.14. Becket, a fugitive in disguise from the King's anger, was all but detected by a look of recognition he cast at a fine hawk on the wrist of a knight. Cf. also Florent's purchase of a hawk and a palfrey in Octavian (N), ll.649 ff., 706 ff., and 755 ff..
14. In the Summer of 1203. This and other examples are discussed in the context of the conditions of contemporary life, especially amongst travellers. See Chapter 5, section (e),i, Pilgrims.
15. Dated by Frank Barlow in Edward the Confessor, London, 1970, pp.273 ff..
16. De Vita Regis Edwardi, col. 369 in Historia Anglicanae Scriptores, ed. Sir Roger Twysden, London, 1652.
17. St.Luke, XXIV, 15; St.John,XX , 14 and XXI, 4.
18. Pilgrim disguise is found in the following: Sir Beues, ll. 1029, 1293, 2058 and 3893 ff.; Generydes, ll. 5292 ff.; Guy of Warwick, ll.1719, 7242, 7382, 8601 and 9815 ff.; King Horn, ll. 1059 ff.; Le Morte Arthur, ll.3485 ff.; Octavian (S), ll. 1357 ff.; Richard, ll.591 ff.; Sir Isumbras, ll.494 ff..

    The ring token occurs in: The Erl of Tolous ,ll.385 ff.; Floris and Blancheflur, ll.141, and 517 ff.; Generydes, ll. 444 ff. and 5309 ff.; Guy of Warwick, ll.10362 ff.; Horn Childe, ll.565 and 994 ff.; Ipomadon , ll.8475 ff.; King Horn, ll.1241 ff.; Sir Isumbras, ll.322 ff.; Sir Perceval, ll.1848 ff.; Sir Tristrem , ll.221,778 and 3091 ff.; Torrent of Portyngale, ll. 1903 ff..

    None of the romances listed above has an earlier version which precedes the A-N. version of King Horn, dated 1170-80. Aüred anticipates this. The earlier versions of Richard, Sir Isumbras, Sir Perceval and Torrent have not been found. Thomas' Tristan, partly

dependent on Wace, must have been finished after 1155. The strong possibility of the original being of such antiquity as to find its way into monastic writings cannot be ignored, however.
On the link between religious writings and romance, Dieter Mehl reminds us that "nearly all romances have survived in large collections containing, for the most part, religious literature, . " He finds a close relationship between the genres suggested in the language and style of the romances. See The Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, London, 1968, p.10ff..
T.Warton,in The History of English Poetry, London, 1840, thinks it not unlikely that as early as 1180 the greater monasteries kept minstrels of their own; see p.65. Payments made to minstrels are recorded in the Bursar's Rolls of Durham Priory, for example, - to " Menestrallo Regis Sociae" in 1278; to Histrionibus Domini Regis" in 1302; and to "Citharistae Domini Regis" in 1330. See E.K.Chambers, The Medieval Stage, Oxford 1903, vol.II, Appendix E.

19. See Christina of Markyate; a Twelfth-Century Recluse, ed. C.H.Talbot, Oxford, 1959. The editor dates the composition between 1156 and 1166, and argues, from the amount of personal detail offered in the work, that the author was very close to Christina. She is known to have been alive in 1155: the date of her death is unknown.
20. The edition of Talbot, op.cit., pp 90 ff.. Theodora was Christina's baptismal name.
21. William of Palerne, ll.1704 ff..
22. Sir Orfeo, ll.241 ff..
23. John Gillingham, in The Life and Times of Richard I, London, 1973, mentions this episode; see p.32. Although relying for his material on chronicle sources, particularly the Itinerarium which contains much information about Eleanor, his authority for this account has not been found.

24. The Chronicle of Walter of Guisborough, ed. H.Rothwell, Camden Series LXXXIX,(1957), pp.198 ff..
25. Richard, ll. 663 ff.; Sir Beues, ll.3095 ff..
26. Chronica Monasterii S.Albani: Johannis de Trokelowe, ed. H.T.Riley, London, 1866, pp.98 f.. The chronicle was written in 1330.
27. Women in disguise occur in the romances thus:
    woman as a boy: William of Palerne, ll.1704 ff.
    as a chamberlain: Arthur and Merlin, ll. 1347 ff.
    as a laundress: Generydes, ll. 4391 ff.
    as a leper: Sir Beues, ll.3671 ff.
    as a minstrel: " ll. 3905 ff.
    as a palmer: " ll.3893 ff..
28. See Chapter 2, section (b), Popular Tales, for further discussion.
29. Benedict of Peterborough: The Chronicle of the Reigns of Henry II and Richard I, ed. William Stubbs, London, 1867, vol.II,p.215.
30. Giraldus Cambrensis: De Vita Galfridi Archiescopi Ebor, from Opera, ed. J.S.Brewer, London, 1873, p.410 ff..
31. See D .M.Stenton, English Society in the Early Middle Ages, Harmondsworth, 1951, pp.410 ff..
32. Le Morte Arthur, ll. 2604 ff., mentions an instance of this:

> And at this assent all they were,
> And set a watch for to wake,
> . . . . .
> A damesel they did be yare,
> And hastely ganne her lettres make;
> A maid sholde on the message fare,
> A trews between them for to take.
> . . . . .
> In her hand a braunch new,
> For-why that no man sholde her let;
> There-by men messengeres know,
> In hastes when that men them met.

33. Achilles' disguise in The Seege of Troy, ll.1234 ff..
34. See Chapter 2, section (b), Popular Tales.
35. Geffrey, in The Tale of Beryn, ll.2915 ff., and the hero of Ipomadon, ll. 6223 ff.. The King in Robert of Sicily unwillingly suffers his disguise as a fool as a punishment for foolish pride.
36. Matthew Paris: Historia Maior, ed. and trans. J.A.Giles, London, 1852, vol.I, p.470, A.D.1243.
37. Ibid., p.138, vol.I, p.138, A.D.1238.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

References to the romances are from the Editions listed in the Bibliography.

Section (a)

1. See Chapter 2, section (b), Popular Tales.
2. E.K.Chambers quotes Stowe's Survey in The Medieval Stage, Oxford, 1925, vol.I, p.394. A detailed description of the custom and its history is found in pp. 390 ff..
3. Ibid., p.199.
4. J.Ritson, Romance and Minstrelsy, Edinburgh, 1891, pp.93 ff..
   In 1509 Henry VIII held a mumming for all the ambassadors at Westminster. The King and the Earl of Essex were " appareled after Turkey fashion "; the lords were in Russian and Prussian costume; torchbearers were " lyke Moreskoes, their faces blacke"; and the ladies of the court, including the Princess Mary, danced "their faces, neckes, armes and handes covered with fyne plesaunce black." See Edward Hall: The Lives of the Kings: Henry VIII, ed. Charles Whibley, 1904, vol.I, pp.15 f..
5. Enid Welsford, The Court Masque, Cambridge University Press, 1927, pp.16 ff..
6. T.W.Craik's observation in The Tudor Interlude, Leicester, 1958, p.85. See Wit and Science, ll. 439 ff.. See Chapter 7, following, for further discussion.
7. E.K.Chambers, op.cit. (note 2), p.391.
8. E.Welsford, op.cit. (note 5), traces this link. The influence of diguise in the mumming tradition upon pageant and drama is discussed here later in Chapter 6, section (b), The Disguising and the Masque.
9. The witholding of names is found in the following romances: Ipomadon, ll.430 ff.; Le Morte Arthur, ll.143 ff., 1492 ff; Morte Arthure, ll. 986 ff., 1059 ff., 1196 ff. and 2620 ff.; Rauf Coilyear, ll. 231 ff.; Sir Isumbras, ll.466 ff..

10. Change of name or false name occurs in the following: Sir Beues, ll. 2805 ff.; Emaré, ll.352 ff., 703 ff.; Guy of Warwick, ll. 7867 ff.; King Edward, ll.124 ff.; King Horn,ll.766 ff.; Kyng Alisaunder, ll. 7464 ff.; Rauf Coilyear, ll.241 ff.; Sowdone of Babylone, ll. 1135 ff.; Sir Eglamour, ll. 466 ff.; Sir Ferumbras, ll. 440 ff., 1165 ff.; Sir Tristrem, ll.532 ff., 1215 ff..
11. S.Freud, Totem and Taboo, London, 1913, pp.56 ff..
12. See J.G.Frazer, The Golden Bough, London 1890, Chapter XXII, Tabooed Words.
13. On the significance of the names of Degaré and Emaré, see Chapter 1, section (e), The Identity Romances.
14. In many early societies the chieftain did not achieve his kingdom until he was deified. This involved the "raising" of the man by a goddess by means of ceremonies including a sacred marriage. On this practice see S.H.Hooke, Myth, Ritual and Kingship, Oxford, 1958, esp. pp.52 ff..
15. The game as it occurs in Sir Gawain is discussed in A Study of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, G.L. Kittredge, Cambridge, Mass., 1916, pp. 9-74 and 218-23.
16. Julian Pitt-Rivers, Honour and Social Status, in J.G. Peristiany, (ed.), Honour and Shame, London, 1965. See pp. 19-79.
17. The First Nine Books of Danish History, trans. O.Elton, London, 1894, p.68.
18. Bradford Broughton, The Legends of Richard I, Coeur de Lion, Paris & The Hague, 1966, traces instances of the game in these stories. See his chapter Pluck Buffet, pp.120-23.
19. The strange knight is not merely dressed in green, of course; the poet describes every feature and detail of the man and his horse as coloured thus (S.G.G.K. ll. 136-195.).
20. G.K.Chambers, op.cit. (note 2),pp.185 f..
21. J.G.Frazer, op.cit. (note 12), chapter XXVIII, The Killing of the Tree Spirit, esp. p.396.

22. Annales Londinii: the Chronicles of Edward I and II, vol.I, p.267. See R.Withington, English Pageantry, Harvard University Press, 1918, vol.I, pp.74 ff..
23. R.Withington, op.cit..
24. Vol.I, p.267; see Withington, op.cit..
25. On the pageantic development of the tournament see the discussion in Chapter 6 following.
26. Withington, op.cit. (note 22), S.G.G.K. is not likely to have pre-dated Stepney (1307).
27. E.Welsford, op.cit. (note 5), p.6, n.3.
28. E.g. A.H.Krappe,"Who was the Green Knight?", Speculum XIII (1938), pp.206-15; and D.B.J.Randall, "Was the Green Knight a Fiend?", Studies in Philology LVII (1960), pp.479-91.
29. A.C.Spearing, The Gawain-Poet: a Critical Study, Cambridge University Press, 1970, would support this. On the disguise and ambiguity of the Green Knight, he says:

> . . the mystery remains unsolved . . The material does not fall of itself into a single pattern of organisation and significance, but into a number of alternative patterns. The choice and adjustment are ours."

See p.286.

30. Sir Gawain; late fourteenth century according to Tolkiėn & Gordon. Arthur and Merlin; written between 1250 and 1300, according to O.D.Macrae-Gibson, editor.
31. Macrae-Gibson thinks that this is a highly compressed version of the episode in Lestoire Merlin; see his note to l. 1997, Of Arthour and of Merlin (see Bibliography.).
Merlin also appears briefly as a beggar at l.2447 ff..
32. Historia Regum Britanniae, VIII, 20.
33. The Hero, F.R.Somerset, London, 1936, Chapter XXVI, esp. p.278.
34. Ibid.
35. See Chapter 1, section (f), Disguise: the Stock Situation, and Chapter 2, section (a), Pious and Historical Legend. Comparative dates of the two compositions are: Kyng Alisaunder; beginning of the fourteenth century: Alexander A; 1340-70 (Severs).

36. Chapter 2, section (a), Pious and Historical Legend. N.B. The poet's own inserted description of the appearance of Neptabanus as a god.

37. Kyng Alisaunder, ll. 5465 ff., 7464 ff. and 7600 ff.. The disguise of the Persian soldier (ll.3886 ff.) and the disguise of the angel (ll.5072 ff.) also feature in this romance.

38. Herodotus, Bk.IV, ch.105; Virgil, Eclogues, viii, 95-99; Ovid, Metamorphoses, i,237. See W.W.Skeat, (ed.), William of Palerne (see Bibliography), pp. xix ff., Preface to the edition of 1832 by Sir Frederick Madden.

39. Karl Simrock, Handbuch der Deutschen Mythologie, Bonn, 1855, p.537. Braunde uses a ring to disenchant Alphonse (ll.4421 ff.).

40. W.W.Skeat, op.cit. (note 38).

41. S.Baring-Gould, The Book of Were-Wolves, London, 1865.

42. Hrolf's Saga Kraka, ed. D.Slay, Copenhagen, 1960, p.55, cap.10. Gwyn Jones' translation, from Eirik the Red and Other Icelandic Sagas, London, 1961,p.265 reads:

> She now struck him with her wolf-skin gloves, declaring that he should become a cave-bear, fierce and savage. "You shall enjoy no other food than your father's stock, and of that you shall kill for your meat more than has ever been heard tell of. You shall never win free of this enchantment, and this my memento shall prove harder on you than anything."

43. Baring-Gould. op.cit. (note 41) translates thus:

> He spoke to her of many things till the bear's form stole over him, and he went forth a bear. She followed him, and saw that a great body of men had dogs with them. The bear rushed away from the cavern, but the dogs and the king's men came upon him, and there was a desperate struggle. He wearied many men before he was brought to bay, and had slain all the dogs. But now they made a ring about him and he ranged around it, but could see no means of escape, so he seized a man who stood next to him and rent him assunder; then was the bear so exhausted that he cast himself down flat; at once the men rushed in upon him and slew him.

44. Volsunga Saga, c.5. has an account of a she-wolf with a taste for human blood - reputedly the mother

of King Siggeir - who was able to take the form upon her "fyrir trollskapar sakir ok fjolkkungi" (through devilry and witchcraft). Yuglinga Saga, c.7, speaks of Odin who could become bird or beast, fish or woman, and travel to distant lands in the twinkling of an eye. The Faroese Song of Finnur tells of Finn's ability to change himself into a wolf and slay many men:

> Hegar iØ Finnur hetta saer,
> Mannspell var at meini,
> Skapti hann seg i vargliki:
> Hann feldi allvael fleiri.

For examples in Norse literature see S.Baring-Gould, op.cit. (note 41).

Marie de France also indicates the Norman familiarity with werwolf tales in Bisclavret:

> Bisclavret ad nun en bretan,
> Garwaf l'apelent li Norman,
> Jadis le poeit hume oir
> E sovent suleit avenir,
> Humes plusurs garual devindrent
> E es boscages meisun tindrent.
> Garualf, ceo est beste salvage:
>
> (ll.4 ff.)

Marie de France:Lais, ed.A.Ewart, Oxford, 1976.

45. Volsunga Saga, ed. Wilhelm Ranisch, Berlin, 1891,c.8. Baring-Gould translates thus:

> Now it fell out that as they went through the forest collecting monies, that they lighted on a house in which two men were sleeping, with great gold rings on them; they had dealings with witchcraft, for wolf-skins hung up in the house above them; it was the fourth day on which they might come out of their second state. They were kings' sons. Sigmund and Sinfjotli got into the habits, and could not get out of them again, and the nature of the original beasts came over them, and they howled as wolves - they learned, both of them, to howl. Now they went into the forest and each took his own course.

46. S.Baring-Gould, op.cit. (note 41), p.15.

47. Ibid., pp.35 ff..

48. Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth, see Baring-Gould, p.35 ff..

49. Alisaundrine has already found a successful disguise for Melior - the clothes of a boy (ll.1704 ff.).

50. J. Speirs, Medieval English Poetry, London, 1957,p.103.
51. J.H.Blessing, A Comparison of Some Middle English Romances with the Old French Antecedents, Stanford University Dissertation, 1959; see pp.26 ff..
52. See Guillaume de Palerne, ed. H.Michelant, Paris, 1876.
53. Blessing, op.cit., p.50 ff..
54. Discussed in Chapter 1, section (b), The Comic Use of Disguise.

Section (b)

1. J.Huizinga, Homo Ludens, London, 1949, pp.132 ff..
2. European Drama in the Early Middle Ages, London, 1974, pp.35 ff..
3. Chapter 4 in Myth, Ritual and Kingship, ed. S.H.Hooke, Oxford, 1958; see p.133.
4. H.J.A.Rose, A Handbook of Greek Mythology, London, 1933, p.104.
5. A.B.Cooke, Zeus, Cambridge, 1925, vol.I,p.522.
6. J.A.K.Thompson, Studies in the Odyssey, Oxford, 1914, p.54.
7. A.M.Hocart, The Progress of Man, London, 1933, p.223.
8. Cf.R.S.Loomis, Celtic Myth and Arthurian Legend, New York, 1927.
9. J.L.Weston, in From Ritual to Romance, New York, 1957, p.5, whose enthusiastic debt to J.G.Frazer is acknowledged and repeated in Chapter 1.
10. J.Speirs, Medieval English Poetry, London, 1957, pp. 102 and 104. See also Anne Wilson, Traditional Romance and Tale, Cambridge, 1976, for this view.
11. J.G.Frazer, The Golden Bough, London, 1890, vol.II, p.133.
12. F.R.Somerset, The Hero, London, 1936, p.192.
13. Ibid., p.254.
14. G.Jones' translation from Eirik the Red and Other Icelandic Sagas, London, 1961, p.134 reads thus:

When she arrived in the evening together with the man who had been sent to escort her, this is how she was attired: she was wearing a blue cloak with straps which was set with stones right down to the hem; she had glass beads about her neck, and on her head a black lambskin hood lined with white catskin. She had a staff in her hand with a knob on it; it was ornamented with brass and set about with stones just below the knob. Round her middle she wore a belt made of touchwood, and on it was a big skin pouch in which she kept those charms of hers which she needed for her magic. On her feet she had hairy calf-skin shoes with long thongs, and on the thong-ends big knobs of lateen. She had on her hands catskin gloves which were white inside and hairy.

15. The Story of Burnt Njal, trans. G.W.Dasent, London, 1911, p.218. Addendum: see below *.
16. R.S.Loomis, op.cit. (note 8); E.Hull, The Cuchulainn Saga , London, 1898; A.Nutt, The Voyage of Bran, London, 1895, and The Influence of Celtic upon Medieval Romance, London, 1904.
17. F.R.Somerset, op.cit. (note 12), pp.92 ff..
18. W.J.Gruffyd, Math vab Mathonwy, Cardiff, 1928, p.81.
19. See The Mabinogion, transs. C.Jones & G.Jones, London, 1949, pp 55 ff., Math Son of Mathonwy. See also Michael Senior, Myths of Britain, London, 1979. Chapters 2 and 3, for a discussion and interpretation of the stories of Math and Pwyll.
20. The Mabinogion, pp.3 ff..
21. Ibid. p.41 ff..
22. These and themes akin to them occur in the following romances:

    beggar disguise in love:
    Sir Beues, ll. 3853 ff.; Havelok, ll.577 ff.; Horn Childe , ll.889 ff.; King Horn, ll.417 ff.; Sir Orfeo, ll.497 ff,; Sir Tristrem,ll.2238 ff..

    the fostered or unknown noble child:
    Emaré, Havelok, Lai le Freine, Libeaus Desconus, Octavian, Sir Degaré, Sir Eglamour, Sir Isumbras, Sir Perceval and Torrent of Portyngale.

    the nobleman of poor life:
    Generydes, Guy of Warwick, Havelok, Horn Childe,

King Horn, Sir Beues, Sir Isumbras, Sir Orfeo and Sir Tristrem.

beheading game in disguise: Sir Gawain.

* Addendum to note 15.

Laxdaela Saga, edd. and transs. M.Magnusson & H. Pālsson, Harmondsworth, 1969, section 29, p.112.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

References to the romances are from the Editions listed in the Bibliography.

Section (a)

1. Sidney Painter, William the Marshal, Knight Errant, Baron and Regent of England, Baltimore, 1933; see Chapter 3.
2. L'histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal, comte de Striguil et de Pembroke, ed. P.Meyer, (Société de l'Histoire de France), Paris, 1891-1901.
3. Chandos Herald: The Life and Feats of Arms of Edward the Black Prince, ed. M.Francisque-Michel, London & Paris, 1883.
4. Boucicaut: Le Livre des Faicts du bon messire Jean le Maingre, dit Boucicaut, in M. de Poujoulot, Nouvelle Collection des mémoires pour servir a l'histoire de France, ii, 205-332, Paris, 1850.
5. Chandos Herald, op.cit. (note 3).
6. Augustine Vincent, A Discoverie of Errours, London, 1662, p.446.
7. Richard Barber, The Knight and Chivalry, Ipswich, 1970, pp.99 ff.. Also Olive Sayce, (ed.), The Poets of the Minnesang, Oxford, 1967.
8. R.Barber, op.cit., pp.168 ff.. Also Otto Höfler, "Ulrich von Lichtenstein Venusfahrt und Artusfahrt", in F.Panzer,(ed.), Studien zur deutschen Philologie des Mittelalters, Heidelberg, 1950.
9. His appearance is apparently recorded in an early fourteenth-century miniature (Universitätsbibliothek, Heidelberg, MS. Cod. pal. germ. 848 f. 237.).
10. English romance almost never includes female dress for a man. See Chapter 2, section (b), and Chapter 3, where this is discussed.

Section (b)

1. For other instances of disguised combat see:

Amis and Amiloun, ll.1117 ff.; Arthur and Merlin, ll.8385 ff.; Ipomadon, ll.3057 ff., 3071 ff., 3624 ff., 4183 ff., 4460 ff.; Le Morte Arthur. ll.97 ff., 174 ff., 1492 ff., 1554 ff.; Morte Arthure , ll.2620 ff., 4180 ff.; Richard, ll.266 ff., 272 ff.; Sir Beues, ll.1635 ff., 2805 ff.; Sir Eglamour, ll.449 ff,; Sir Gawain, ll. 136 ff.; Sir Gowther, ll. 400 ff., 460 ff., 555 ff..

2. The "hounskull" or "pig-faced bascinet". See F.M.Kelly & R.Schwabe, A Short History of Costume and Armour, London, 1931, vol.I, p.56.

3. Very early mention of a covering helmet (haeleþhelm), is made in Genesis B, ll. 442 ff.: the disguise is that of Satan:

> Angan hine þa gyrwan godes ansaca,
> fus on fraetwum, (haefde faecne hyge),
> haeleþhelm on heafod asette and þone full hearde geband,
> spenn mid spangum; . . . .
> . . . . . .
> wole dearnunga drihtnes geongran,
> mid mandaedum men beswican,
> forlaeden and forlaeran, þaet hie wurdon laþ gode.
>
> The Junius Manuscript, ed. G.P.Krappe, Columbia University Press, 1931.

4. M.P.Lacombe, Arms and Armour, London, 1893, p.111, for example.

5. Jean Froissart.Froissart's Chronicles, ed. and trans. John Jolliffe, London, 1967, vol.III, chap. LIX.

6. Froissart, op.cit., vol.III, chap. XXXIII.

7. Painter, William Marshal, Baltimore, 1933, p.40.

8. Viscount Dillon, "A MS. Collection of Ordinances of Chivalry", Archaeologia LVII (1900), p.43.

9. Froissart, op.cit. (note 5), vol III,p.23.
Hue de Rotelande has Ipomedon in white, red and black armour in the romance of the same name, written in about 1185; see Ipomedon, edd. E.Kölbing & E.Koschwitz, Breslau, 1889, ll.3531-5544. It cannot be concluded, however, that this was taken from the poet's observation rather than his imagination.

10. The Hon. Robert Curzon, "Notices of Armour in the Middle Ages", Archaeological Journal XXII (1865), pp.7-14.
11. See Sir W.S.Hope & E.G.Atchley, English Liturgical Colours, London, 1918, pp.127 ff..
12. June, 1449. Le Roi René organised the Pas d'Armes. It was described by Loys Beauvau, Senechal of Anjou. See Oeuvres complètes du roi René, ed. Comte de Quatrebarbes, Angers, 1845. It is discussed by G. Wickham, Early English Stages , London, 1959, vol.I, p.45.

Section (c)

1. Wace: Roman de Rou, ed. A.Andresen, Heilbronn, 1879, ll.7699 ff.. See A.R.Wagner, Heralds and Heraldry, Oxford University Press, 1939, Appendices A & B, for an exhaustive list of passages from literature referring to the early history of heraldry.
2. Matthew Paris: Chronica Maior, ed. H.R.Luard, London, 1874, vol.II, p.372.
3. The Chronicle of Walter of Guisborough, ed H.Rothwell, Camden Society Series LXXXIX, London, 1957, p.200.

See also C.Bullock-Davies, Menestrellorum Multitudo, University of Wales Press, 1978, p.122, on Johannes le Barbor, minstrel, listed in Edward I's payroll for 1306.

4. The Roll of Caerlaverock, ed. Thomas Wright, Camden Society, London, 1864.
5. L'histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal, op.cit. (section (a), note 2), tome I, pp. 977 ff..
6. N.Denholm-Young, History and Heraldry, Oxford, 1965, esp. p.57. Also C.Bullock-Davies, op.cit. (note 3), pp.38 ff. on the heralds.
7. The Roll of Caerlaverock, op.cit. (note 4), ll.1-14.
8. N.Denholm-Young, op.cit. (note 6),pp.45 ff..
9. F.P.Barnard, Heraldry , (in Medieval England, ed. H.W.C. Davis, Oxford, 1924), pp.195 ff..
10. A.R.Wagner, op.cit. (note 1), p.21.

Section (d)

1. The Middle English "Lai le Freine" ed. Margaret Wattie, (Smith College Studies in Modern Languages,X,3), Northampton, Mass., 1929.
2. This skill was highly valued in a noble woman as early as the eleventh century at least. Edith, the eldest daughter of Earl Godwin, and educated at the nunnery at Wilton (a famous seminary for royal and noble ladies) was considered suitable as a wife for Edward the Confessor by virtue of her lineage, youth and beauty, her good literary education and her skill in spinning and embroidery. See Vita Aedwardi Regis, ed. and trans. F.Barlow, London, 1962, pp.14 f., 46 f., and 95 ff..
3. For the life of Twici and an edition of his treatise, see Alice Dryden, The Art of Hunting, Northampton, 1908.
4. MS. Bibl. Nat., Paris. f.fr. 1593 (anc. 7615) fol. 165-9. See A.Dryden, op.cit. (note 3), La Chasse du Cerf.
5. W.A.Baillie-Groham, (ed.), Edinburgh, 1904.
6. A.Dryden, op.cit.(note 3).
7. Rachel Hands, English Hawking and Hunting in the Boke of St.Alban's , Oxford University Press, 1975.

Section (e)

1. On safe-conduct for pilgrims see E.L.Cutts, Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages, London, 1926, pp.158 ff..
2. De Jure et Statu Menevensis Ecclesiae, in Giraldus Cambrensis:Opera, ed. J.S.Brewer, London, 1863, vol.III, pp.291 f..
3. Modern Language Notes LIX (1944), pp.176-78.
4. Chronicles, ed. S.Luce, (Société de l'Histoire de France), Paris, 1872, vol.III, p.286.
5. Walter Map: De Nugis Curialium , ed. M.R.James, London, 1914, p.234.
6. Laȝamon's Brut, edd. G.L.Brook & R.F.Leslie,vol.II, E.E.T.S.o.s.277, London, 1978; see ll.15342 ff..

7. J.Jusserand, English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages, London, 1889, Chapter III. Also D.J.Hall, English Medieval Pilgrimage, London, 1965.
8. Rolls of Parliament, Statute 12.Rich.II.cap.7. See Jusserand, op.cit., esp. Part I, Chapter 2.
9. For other references to pilgrim disguise in romance, see: The Erl of Tolous, ll. 244 ff., 1064 ff.; Guy of Warwick, ll.7382 ff., 8601.; Richard, ll.591 ff.; Sir Beues, ll. 1029 ff., 1293 ff., 3893 ff..
10. Rolls of Parliament, Statute 27.Edw.III. St.ii.ch.2. See Jusserand, op.cit. (note 7), Part I, Chapter 2.
11. Rolls of Parliament, Statute 25.Edw.III.St.iii.ch.2. See Jusserand, op.cit, Part II, Chapter 2.
12. J.Jusserand, op.cit., p.128.
13. Gottfried von Strassburg: Tristan, ed. A.T.Hatto, Harmondsworth, 1960, p.141.
14. For other merchant disguise in romance, see: Arthur and Merlin, ll. 1981 ff.; The Erl of Tolous, ll.961 ff.; Generydes, ll. 4203 ff..
15. For this and the following details of the social and legal status of the leper in the Middle Ages, see P.Richards, The Medieval Leper, Cambridge, 1977.
16. Richards, Documents, pp.123 ff..
17. Ibid.
18. Gottfried, op.cit. (note13), p.332.
19. Ibid.
20. Partonope of Blois, ed. A.Bodtke, E.E.T.S.e.s.109, London, 1912, ll. 3671 ff..
21. Marie de France: Lais, ed. A.Ewart, London, 1960,p.178.
22. For other references to magic and physic in romance, see: Alexander A, ll. 716 ff.; Arthur and Merlin, ll. 1928 ff., 1975 ff., 2511 ff.; Kyng Alisaunder, ll. 331 ff., 384 ff.; Sir Gawain, ll.2445 ff., 2463 ff..
23. See P.Richards, op.cit. (note 15), Statua Hospitalis de Sancto Juliano, (testaments), p.129.
24. Chronica Monasterii S.Albani, ed. T.Riley, London, 1866, p.98 f.; wrongly attributed to Walsingham by J.Ritson; see note 27 below.

25. Wace: Roman de Brut, ed. I.Arnold, Paris, 1938-40, ll. 1997 ff..
26. Thomas Stapleton, "A Brief Summary of the Wardrobe Accounts of Edward II", Archaeologia XXVI (1869), p.342. Generous payments to minstrels are also noted in C.Bullock-Davies, Menestrellorum Multitudo, University of Wales Press, 1978, pp.22 f., 69 f. and 107.
27. J.Ritson, A Dissertation on Romance and Minstrelsy, (Ancient Engleish Romancees, vol.I), Edinburgh, 1802, p.76.
28. J.Jusserand, op.cit. (note 7), Appendix XI, (Patent Roll. Edw.IV.pt.1.m.17, Pro Fraternitate Ministrallorum.).
29. E.K.Chambers, The Medieval Stage, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1903, vol.I, p.45. Chambers calls it one of "the commonest clichés in romance."
30. Aucassin et Nicolete, ed. F.W.Bourdillon, Manchester University Press, 1930, section 38. C.Bullock-Davies, op.cit.(note 26), furnishes information on Mathilda Makejoy, saltatrix, named in the payroll (MS.E. 101/369/6) of Edward I's celebration of the knighting of the Prince of Wales in 1306. See pp.55 ff., 58 f. and 137 f. for details of her life, costume and duties.
31. E.K.Chambers, op.cit. (note 29), vol.I, p.44.
32. Historia Britonum, xi,I.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

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Section (a)

1. F.H.Cripps-Day, The History of the Tournament in England and France, London, 1918.
2. E.g. the early fourteenth-century illustration to a treatise on sin, featuring the tournament (BM. MS. Roy. 19.c.i.f.204b.).
3. Thus Richard Barber, The Knight and Chivalry, Ipswich, 1970. Chapter 10 gives a detailed description of early tournaments. Also N.Denholm-Young, The Tournament in the Thirteenth Century, (Studies in Medieval History presented to F.M.Powicke), Oxford, 1948.
4. E.g. Matthew Paris: Chronica Maiora, ed. H.R.Luard, London, 1872-83, vol.V, pp.318 f.. Paris records the slaying of Arnold de Montigny by Roger de Lemburn using a non-blunted weapon illegally, at Wallenden in 1252.
5. Henry, the "Young King", spent the years 1176-82 tourneying with William Marshal in northern France and Flanders. See L'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal, ed. P.Meyer, Paris, 1891-1901, ll.2637 ff..
6. See R.Barber, op.cit. (note 3), pp.185 f..
7. N.Denholm-Young, op.cit. (note 3), p.257.
8. R.Barber, op.cit., p.171.
9. On Crécy and the new strategy, and the development of the long-bow under Edward III, see G.M.Trevelyan, A Shortened History of England, Harmondsworth, 1959, pp. 183-86.
10. Phillippe de Navarre: Mémoires, ed. C.Kohler, Paris, 1913, pp.7 f.. See Chivalric Drama and Imitations of Arthurian Romance, R.S.Loomis, (Medieval Studies in Memory of A.Kingsley Porter, vol.I), Harvard University Press, 1939.
11. Ruth H.Cline, "The Influence of the Romances on Tourna-

ments of the Middle Ages", Speculum XX (1945), pp. 204-211, esp. p.208. Richard Barber, op.cit. (note 3), dates this event 1224: see p.187.

12. R.Barber, op.cit., p.187.
13. R.Cline, op.cit., p.209. See A.Schultz, Das höfische Leben zur Zeit der Minnesinger, Leipzig, 1889, vol.II, pp.117 f..
14. R.Cline, op.cit., p.209.
15. Ulrich von Lichtenstein: Frauendienst, ed. Reinhold Bechstein, Leipzig, 1888, stanzas 1416, 1430, 1437, 1441, 1448, 1453, 1454. See R.Cline, op.cit.(note 11), p.208.
16. Alberici monachi Trium Fontium chronicon, in Accessiones historicae: scriptores rerum Germanicarum, ed. G.G. Leibnitz, Hanover, 1700. See R.Cline, op.cit., p.205.
17. R.Cline, op.cit., p.205.
18. For the "Alexander Joust", see R.C.Clephan, The Tournament: its Periods and Phases, London, 1919, p.6. R.Cline op.cit. (note11), and R.S.Loomis, op.cit. (note 10), list and discuss the other tournaments mentioned.
19. R.Cline, op.cit., p.204.
20. Matthew Paris: Chronica Maiora, op.cit. (note 4),
21. Ibid.
22. Lodewijk van Velthem: Spiegel Historael, edd. Vander Linden & De Vreese, Brussels, 1906, pp. 198-320. See R.S.Loomis, op.cit.(note 10), pp.91-93.
23. Ibid.. Loomis' translation of van Velthem.
24. R.S.Loomis, op.cit., p.92.
25. N.Denholm-Young, op.cit. (note 3), p.255.
26. In "Cadwalader, Arthur and Brutus in the Wigmore Manuscript", Speculum XVI (1941), pp.109-120.
27. See N.Denholm-Young, op.cit. (note 3), pp.265 f., and T.F.Tout, Edward the First, London, 1893, p.117. Additional evidence for Edward I's interest in romance lies in the so-called Herald's Roll, a fragment of a thirteenth-century painted roll on which the heroes of romance - including Bevis, Gawain, Roland and Prester John - are assigned coats of arms side by side with the knights of Edward. The feminine interest

of the roll (women's names appear on it) encourages Denholm-Young to suggest that this is the Eleanor (of Castile) Roll of Arms, and that the Queen was strongly influential in the resurgence of the Arthurian cult during her husband's reign. See his comments in History and Heraldry, 1245-1310, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1965, pp.45-52; esp. p.49 for his discussion on the Feast of the Swans in 1306.

28. See R.S.Loomis, op.cit. (note 10), pp.81 ff..
29. See Chapter 4, section (a), The Direct Influence of Rites, Customs and Games.
30. Ibid.. The romance he is thinking of, Sir Gawain, is of a later date.
31. R.S.Loomis, op.cit., pp.93-97.
32. Annales Paulini: Chronicum Edward I and II, ed. William Stubbs, London, 1882-3,p.354. See E.K.Chambers, The Medieval Stage, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1903, vol. I, pp.391 ff..
33. Ibid.
34. Continuato Chronicorum, Murimuth; see E.K.Chambers, op.cit.
35. R.Cline, op.cit. (note 11), p.207.
36. See N.Harris Nicholas, "Accounts of the Expenses of the Great Wardrobe of King Edward the Third", Archaeologia, (1870), pp.5-163. See Appendix C following for the text of the letters of safe-conduct for the contestants.
37. Thomas of Walsingham: Ypodigma Neustria, ed. H.T.Riley, London, 1867, p.282.
38. Wardrobe Accounts of Edward III; see note 36.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. John Stowe: Survey of London, ed. C.L.Kingsford, Oxford, 1908, vol II, p.29.
43. The Castle of Perseverance is discussed more fully in Chapter 7 following.

44. For the text of La Forme quon tenoit des tournoys et assemblées au temps du roy uterpendragon et du roy artus, see Edouard Sandoz, "Tourneys in the Arthurian Tradition", Speculum XIX (1944), pp.389-420.
45. Ex.MS.Cotton Julius, E.IV., showing the life of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. See Joseph Strutt, Horda Angel-Cynna, London, 1775, vol.II, pp.124 f..
46. Ibid.
47. R.Cline, op.cit. (note 11), p.210.
48. See Sydney Anglo, Spectacle, Pageant and Early Tudor Policy, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1969.
49. For Hall's description of these jousts, see Appendix B, Six Romantic and Disguised Jousts of the Early Sixteenth Century.
50. Pas d'Armes de la Bergière: Loys de Beauvau, Senechal of Anjou, ed. Comte de Quatrebarbes, in Oeuvres Complètes du Roi René, Angers, 1845, vol II, pp. 49-99. See also R.Cline, op.cit. (note 11), p.209, and G.Wickham, Early English Stages, 1300-1660, London, 1959, vol.I, pp.45 ff..
51. Ibid.
52. G.Wickham, op.cit. (note 50), pp.45 ff..
53. The College of Arms MS. 1st M.16., which tabulates the colours and their virtues, is reproduced by Wickham, op.cit., p.46.
54. Edward Hall: The Lives of the Kings: Henry VIII, ed. Charles Whibley, London, 1904, vol.I, p.22.
55. Ibid., pp.28 f..
56. Ibid., pp.28-239. See also Robert Withington, English Pageantry, Harvard University Press, 1918, vol.I, pp. 97-100.

Section (b)

1. The overlapping and parallel progress in the untidy development of these dramatic forms is indicated by the chronological arrangement of important examples of mumming, Courts of Love, allegorical tourneys and pageants, disguisings and masques in Appendix D.

2. See this chapter, section (a), for these tourneys.
3. Edward Hall: The Lives of the Kings: Henry VIII, ed. Charles Whibley, London, 1904, vol.I, p.172.
4. Ibid., p.239.
5. S.Anglo, "The Evolution of the Early Tudor Disguising, Pageant and Mask", Renaissance Drama, New Series no.1, (1958), Northwestern University Press, Evanston, pp.3-44.
6. College of Arms MS. M.6. fols.57^{v}-58^{r}. See S.Anglo, Spectacle, Pageant and Early Tudor Policy, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1969, p.115.
7. The Castle of Jealousy: ll.3797-4058 and 20279-20784; the Tower of Shame: ll.20785-20861 and 21215-21694.
8. Piers Plowman, Prologue and Passus XX, respectively. See Roberta D.Cornelius, The Figurative Castle, Bryn Mawr, 1930, for a discussion of medieval allegories of castles and sieges as in works attributed to Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of St.Victor, in Le Chasteau d'Amour by Robert Grosseteste, and in Piers Plowman as influenced by Robert Grosseteste.
9. See Appendix B, Six Romantic and Disguised Jousts of the Early Sixteenth Century.
10. G.Wickham, Early English Stages, 1300-1660, London, 1959, vol.I, pp.49.
11. See G.Wickham, The Stage and Drama Till 1660, in * The Sphere History of Literature in the English Language, vol.III, pp.43 ff.. Also mentioned here is Chaucer's "subtile tregetoures . . . with-inne an halle large." Franklin's Tale, ll.1136-1151.
12. Edward Hall, op.cit. (note 3), p.40.
13. Ibid., p.149, as follows:

> . . in the hall was made a goodly castel, wonderously set out, and in it certayn ladies and knightes . .

14. The wedding of Arthur and Katharine of Aragon.
15. Cotton MS. Vitellius, c. xi. fol.125b., cited by Paul Reyher in Les Masques Anglais, Paris, 1909.

* Erratum. The Sphere History of Literature in the English Language, ed. C.Ricks, London, 1971, vol.III, p.43 ff..

16. Tournament Roll 34-40, cited by Sydney Anglo in The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster, Oxford, 1968.
Bacon's remarks (Essays: Of Masques and Triumphs, 1612) indicate a close connection between the beasts of such disguisings and similar creatures in the tournament displays. There is also a strong suggestion that they all derive from the beasts of heraldry. He says:

> For Justes, and Tourneys, and Barriers the glories of them are chiefly in the chariots, wherein the challengers make their entry; especially if they be drawn with strange beasts: as lions, bears, camels and the like; or in the devices of their entrance, or in the bravery of their liveries, or in the goodly furniture of their horses and armour.

Withington, op.cit. (note 22), p.121, argues that heraldry and romance originally suggested the use of these beasts.

17. Cotton Vitellius, op.cit. (note 15).
18. S.Anglo, op.cit. (note 6), p.103.
19. E.K.Chambers describes and discusses the mumming in The Medieval Stage, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1903, vol. I, pp.393.
20. Ibid., pp.393, 394 and n.1.
21. See E.Welsford, The Court Masque, Cambridge University Press, 1927, pp 37 ff., quoting H.T.Riley, Memorials of London and London Life, London, 1868, p.669.
22. For these examples see Welsford, op.cit., and R.Withington, English Pageantry, Harvard University Press, 1918, vol I, p.104.
23. The Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom, ed. J.S.Farmer, (Tudor Facsimile Texts), London & Edinburgh, 1909, p.15.
24. "A Brief Summary of the Wardrobe Accounts of Edward II", Thomas Stapleton, Archaeologia, XXVI (1836), pp.318 ff., esp. p.342.
25. Ex.Harleian MS. 247, quoted by Chambers, op.cit. (note 21), p.38.
26. Edward Hall op.cit. (note 3), pp.15 f., for example.

27. For example, Withington, op.cit. (note 22), p.122, who defines mumming as an informal dance where knights enter masked and choose partners from among the court ladies; and disguising as a formal occasion where participants were distinct from spectators. Contemporary descriptions do not always follow these definitions.
28. A possible precursor to the disguising may be found in the early Westminster Wassail (1494) when, after dinner, there was " a playe":

> . . . w^{t} a pageant of St. George w^{t} a castle. And also xij lords, knights, Esquires w^{t} ladies dysguysed wch daunced after the wasshall
> . . .
>
> Addl. MS. 6113, fol.169. See Withington, op.cit. (note 22), p.12.

29. It is not uncommon for contemporary writers to confuse terms in this period of masque development, e.g. Lydgate, discussed later in this chapter, who uses the word "disguising" as a synonym for "mumming". See G.Wickham, op.cit.(note 11), pp.43 ff., and E.K. Chambers, op.cit. (note 9), p.400.
30. See Chambers, op. cit. pp.401 ff., for a discussion on the origins of the masking.
31. Johannis de Fordun: Scottischronicon, Edinburgh, 1759, vol.II, p.128. See R.Withington, op.cit. (note 22), p.102.
32. See S.Anglo, op.cit. (note 6), p.122.
33. Chambers, op.cit. (note 19), p.402.
34. Ibid.
35. W.A.Neilson, Origins and Sources of the Court of Love, (Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, IV), Boston, 1899; see Preface, p.iii, and p. 108.
36. Ibid., p.253. Neilson debates whether Marie's creation was, by comparison with the Cour Amoureuse, "a serious Court of Love"; see pp.248 ff..
37. Ibid., p.253, citing Hist. de l'Acad. Roy. des Inscr. et Belles-Lettres, Paris, 1733, vol.VII, p.290 ff..
38. Istorie Fiorentine: Giovanni Villani, Milan, 1802-3, vol.III, pp.254 ff.. I am indebted to Dr. Peter Armour of the Department of Italian, Bedford College, for the following translation:

. . an assembly and groups of a thousand people or more, all dressed in white robes, with a lord called the Lord of Love. This company was occupied exclusively with games and amusements and dances, with ladies, knights and commoners, going through the city with trumpets and various instruments, with rejoicing and gaiety, and attending banquets together, with lunches and dinners. This court lasted nearly two months and was the most noble and famous there has ever been in the city of Florence or in Tuscany.

39. Chronique, Monstrelet, vol.V, pp.1-7. See R.Withington, op.cit.(note 22), p.138.
40. See The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ed. H.N MacCracken, E.E.T.S.e.s.107 (vol.I) and o.s.192 (vol.II), Oxford, 1961.
41. The Castle of Perseverance, the earliest known Moral Interlude, is dated c. 1405.
42. R.Withington, op.cit. (note 22), p.144, quoting from King Henry's Triumphal Entry into London, Herrig's Archives CXXVI (1901), pp. 75 ff..
43. G.Wickham, op.cit. (note 10), p.207.
44. The Mumming at Hertford and Lydgate's other disguisings are found in MacCracken, op.cit.(note)40.
45. Edward Hall, op.cit.(note 3), p.256.
46. Ibid, vol.II,p.79.
47. See S.Anglo, op.cit. (note 6), p.118, and Stephen Orgel, The Masque, in The Sphere History of Literature in the English Language, ed. C.Ricks, London, 1971, vol.III, pp.354 ff.. Also Orgel's The Jonsonian Masque, Cambridge, Mass., 1965, pp.27 ff.; and E.K.Chambers, op.cit. (note 19), pp.398 ff..
48. Cotton MS. Vitellius, e.xi.fol. 125b.. See R.Withington, op.cit. (note 22), p.113, and E.K.Chambers, op.cit. pp.398 f.. The detailed description of the castle scenery is dealt with earlier in this chapter and section.
49. Edward Hall, op.cit. (note 3), vol.II, p.87. Also Orgel's The Jonsonian Masque op.cit., pp.29 ff..

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

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Section (a)

1. Satire on Manners and Costume (Harleian MS. 536), late fourteenth century, in Satirical Songs and Poems, ed. F.W.Fairholt, Percy Society: Early English Poetry, London, 1849, vol. XXVII, p.45.
2. See V.B.Richmond, The Popularity of the Middle English Romance, Ohio, 1975, p.11.
3. See Ronald S.Crane, The Vogue of Medieval Chivalric Romance during the English Renaissance, University of Pennsylvania, 1919, p.12.
4. Roger Ascham: The Scholemaster, ed. Edward Arbour, London, 1927, p.80.
5. See R.Crane, op.cit., p.13.
6. The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney, ed. Albert Feuillerat, Cambridge, 1912-26, vol.III, p.9 ff..
7. E.D.S.Hazlitt, The English Drama and Stage under the Tudor and Stuart Princes, 1543.1664, Roxburghe Library, 1869, pp.183 ff..
8. Ibid., p.181.
9. John Florio's translation, Everyman Library, London, 1910, vol.I, p.187.
10. The Reading of bookes, in Palladis Tamia, Francis Meres, 1598. See C.F.Tucker Brooke, The Tudor Drama, London, 1912, p.234.
11. Putenham, The Arte of English Poesie, 1589, Bk.II, chap. 9. See Joseph Strutt, Sports and Pastimes, London, 1838, p.185.
12. See Chapter 6, sections (a) and (b), and Appendix B, Six Romantic Jousts. See also A.Harbage & S.Schoenbaum, Annals of English Drama, London, 1964, who do not agree with Hall's date on The Castle Dangerous.
13. Ibid.

14. C.R.Baskervill, "Some Evidence for Early Romantic Plays in England", Modern Philology, XIV (1916), pp.229 ff. and 467 ff.; see esp. p.477, n.2.
15. The chronological lists of Harbage and Schoenbaum, op.cit.(note 12), show this change quite markedly.
16. MS. E.5.9. Trinity College, Dublin, in Six Town Chronicles, ed. R.Flenley, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1911, pp.117 ff..
17. C.R.Baskervill, op.cit. (note 14), p.40.
18. Hales-Furnivall, (ed.), Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript, vol.I, p.342. See Baskervill, op.cit..
19. BM.MS.Add.2977; author, William Byrd, mayor in 1580, or William Baxter, sheriff in 1588. See Flenley, op. cit. (note 16), p.31.
20. See Baskervill, op.cit. (note 14), p.231. The Fair Constance of Rome was written for Henslowe c. 1600; and Pericles follows the same romance conventions.
21. C.F.T.Brooke, "On the Source of Common Conditions", Modern Language Notes XXXI (1916), pp.474 ff.. See also David Bevington, From "Mankind" to Marlowe, Harvard University Press, 1962, pp.61 and 191 ff..
22. See Bevington, op.cit., p.61, on Clyomon and Clamydes.
23. See R.Crane, op.cit. (note 3), pp.24 f..
24. See V.B.Richmond, op.cit. (note 2), pp.14 ff..
25. See C.F.T.Brooke, op.cit. (note 21), p.232.
26. For a list of English and Continental romances printed between 1479 and 1572, see Appendix E following.
27. For the printing of these last-named romances, see Crane, op cit.,p.5, who states that they are only ascribed to Wynkyn de Worde on the basis of uncertain typographical evidence.
28. On the printing of the medieval romances see R.Crane, op.cit., pp.1-10.

Section (b)

1. Peter Happé, Tudor Interludes , Harmondsworth, 1972; see The Pride of Life.

2. Happé's edition, op.cit..
3. Ibid.
4. See Mundus et Infans, in English Morality Plays and Moral Interludes, edd. E.T.Schell & J.D.Shuchter, New York, 1969.
5. See Schell & Shuchter's edition, op.cit., for this and the following quotations from Mundus et Infans.
6. See A Middle English Version of the "Gesta Romanorum", ed. from Gloucester Cath. MS. 22., by Karl I.Sandred, Uppsala, 1971, pp.59 ff.; Piers Plowman, B Text, Passus XVI, ll.160-166, Passus XVIII, ll. 90-96 and Passus XIX, ll. 100-102;and Ancrene Wisse, Parts Six and Seven, ed. G.Shepherd, London & Edinburgh, 1959, p.21, l.9 to p.23, l.8.
7. See Ancrene Wisse, op.cit., pp.21-23. For a discussion on the romance imagery, see Shepherd's Introduction, pp.lxx ff.. Rosemary Woolf discusses the Christ-knight as a patristic metaphor whose ancestry lies in the Old Testament and in St.Paul, in The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1968, pp.45 ff., and as a parallel of the warrior-image in O.E.poetry in "Doctrinal Influences on The Dream of the Rood", Medium Aevum XXVII (1958), pp. 137-53. See also Wilbur Gaffney, "The Allegory of the Christ-Knight in Piers Plowman", PMLA. XLVI (1931), pp.151-168; see esp. p.164.
8. Religious Lyrics of the XIV Century, ed. Carleton Brown, Oxford, 1932, p 67, ll.9-14. See Gaffney, op.cit. p.156, and R.Woolf, op.cit., (The English Religious Lyric) Chapter II.
9. See Sandred, op.cit. (note 6), p.61; also Gaffney, op. cit. (note 7), who discusses the Christ-knight image in the Gesta on p.164.
10. An Allegorical Romance on the Death of Christ, in Pierre de Langtoft's Chronicle, ed. Thomas Wright, Appendix II, pp.426-36. See Gaffney, op.cit (note 7), pp. 157 ff., who accepts the argument for Nicholas Bozon of the early thirteenth century as being the likely author.

Thirteenth century art also saw Christ as a crusader

knight, as in the Apocalypse now in BM. MS.Roy. 19 B xv. fol. 31.

11. Gaffney's outline, based on Wright's text. See Gaffney, op.cit.(note 7), p.158.
12. Ibid.
13. B Text, Passus XVIII, ll.22 ff..
14. Jovinianus in the Gesta. See Chapter 2, section (a), Pious and Historical Legends .
15. For this and the following quotations from Wit and Science, see Happé's edition, op.cit. (note 2).
16. In The Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom (1571-78), Merbury's version of Wit and Science, the stage directions indicate that the visor was a head-mask, convenient for theatrical decapitation:

> ". . Wit shall follow, taking his visor off his head, and shall bring it in upon his sword. "

(Glynne Wickham's edition, in English Moral Interludes, London, 1976, p.182, l.455.).
The force of the knight-image in the later play is weak, and still leaves the likelihood that Redford, the earlier writer, had disguised combat in mind whilst dramatising the encounter.

17. For this and the following quotations from Ralph Roister Doister, see Ashley Thorndike, (ed.), The Minor Elizabethan Drama, London & New York, 1958.
18. For this and the following quotations from Fulgens and Lucres, see G.Wickham, (ed)., op.cit. (note 16).
19. Wickham. op.cit., p.71) suggests that properties at hand should be brooms, mops, saucepans and lids, and dish-cloths, much the same, in fact, as Udall directs in Ralph Roister Doister.
20. Part 2. ll.119 ff.:

> B. (Cornelius) hath devised
> Certain strangers freshly disguised
> At his own expense
> For to be here this night also.
>
> A. Ah! Then I see well we shall have a mumming.

Wickham,(op.cit., p.39), draws attention in the similarity in literary tone between Fulgens and Lydgate's

Mumming at Hertford.
C.R.Baskervill discusses the influence of Christmas games and court entertainments on Fulgens in "Conventional Features of Medwall's Fulgens and Lucres", Modern Philology XXIV (1927), pp.419-42. Baskervill also deals here with Fulgens as influenced by the romances, particularly with respect to the wooing theme.

21. From the plan of the theatre in Folger MS. V.a 354, f. 191^{v}. See The Macro Plays , ed. Mark Eccles, E.E.T.S. no.262, Oxford University Press, 1969, Frontispiece.
22. See The Macro Plays, op.cit. for The Castle of Perseverance.
23. See Chapter 6, section (b), The Disguising and the Masque.
24. Roman de la Rose, ll.20683 ff.. See also Chapter 6, op. cit..
25. See Appendix D, and Chapter 6, op.cit.. See also note 8 to Chapter 6, section (b), for other sources and analogues of this theme.
26. David Bevington, From "Mankind" to Marlowe, Harvard University Press, 1962, p. 190. See also G.Wickham, Early English Stages, 1300-1660, London, 1959, vol.I, pp. 182 and 242, for the sixteenth century dramatisation of romance in contemporary moral terms.
27. See Common Conditions, in C.F.T.Brooke, Elizabethan Club Reprints, New Haven,Conn., 1915.
28. John Rastell had this play printed. The story is a close adaptation of the Spanish romance La Celestina. See Robert Potter, The English Morality Play, London & Boston, 1975, pp. 259 ff..
29. Robert Potter, op.cit..
30. See this chapter, section (a).
31. Mundus et Infans, ll.347 ff.: Conscience to Manhood.
32. See Ronald S.Crane, The Vogue of Medieval Chivalric Romance during the English Renaissance, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1919, p.25.
33. See A.Harbage & S.Schoenbaum, Annals of English Drama, London, 1964, for 1516.

34. The term "romantic interlude" used in this discussion is found consistently in Harbage & Schoenbaum, op.cit., by way of describing such works, and usefully accommodates the notions of influence and transition.
35. See Chapter 6, section (b), The Disguising and the Masque.
36. Edward Hall: The Lives of the Kings: Henry VIII, ed. Charles Whibley, London, 1904, vol.II,p 234 ff..
37. See King Henry's Triumphal Entry into London, ed. H.N. MacCracken, Herrig's Archives CXXVI (1901),pp.75 ff..
38. See Edward Hall, op.cit. (note 36), vol. I, p.253.
39. Ibid., vol.II, pp. 234 ff..
40. See Lydgate, discussed in Chapter 6 section (b), The Disguising and the Masque.
41. Se H.A.Evans, English Masques, London, 1897, p.xxii.
42. See note 20, above.
43. See Wickham's edition, op.cit. (note 16), p.182. See also note 16 for comments.
44. Edited Alois Brandl, Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft, 36, Berlin, 1900. See D.Bevington, op. cit. (note 26), pp.92 ff..
45. Edited R.Mark Benbow, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1967, ll.934 ff..
46. ll.200 ff. in J.S.Farmer's edition, in The Dramatic Writings of John Bale, London, 1907.
47. Wickham's edition in English Moral Interludes , op.cit. (note 16), p.133.
48. Happé's edition in Tudor Interludes, Harmondsworth, 1972.
49. Ibid.
50. See Appendix B, Six Romantic and Disguised Jousts.
51. See Appendix A for devil disguise.
52. BH. ll.2058 ff.; KyA. ll.3886 ff. and 5465 ff..
53. H. ll.857 ff.; KH. ll. 417 ff.; SO. ll. 497 ff.; and ST. ll.2238 ff..
54. see Appendix A, Combat.
55. Ibid.. See Names .
56. See Chapter 1, section (a), iii, and (d), for an examination of this theme.

57. For this and the following quotations from Wisdom, see Mark Eccles' edition in The Macro Plays, op.cit. (note 21).
58. From Happé's edition. See note 48.
59. See Appendix A. Combat:disguised .
60. See Chapter 1, section (a), iii, The Testing of Self.
61. The Tudor Interlude, Leicester, 1958, p.85.
62. See Chapter 4, section (a), The Direct Influence of Rites, Customs and Games.
63. See D.M.Hill, "The Structure of Sir Orfeo", Medieval Studies , XXIII (1961), p.139; also F.J.Child, The English and Scottish Popular Ballads, New York, 1957, vol. II, p.505, and vol.III, p.456.
French & Hale, (edd.), Middle English Metrical Romances, New York, 1930, revd, 1964, note this convention in their editions of Sir Degaré,ll.70 ff.; Sir Orfeo , ll. 69 ff.; and Sir Launfal, ll. 220 ff..
64. See Appendix A, III, Non-Recognition .
65. See Happé's edition, op.cit. (note 48).
66. T.W.Craik, op.cit, (note 61), p.78.
67. At least thirteen instances of romances containing unmasking and recognition are listed in Appendix A,II, Recognition.
68. Youth, from Six Anonymous Plays, ed. J.S.Farmer, London. 1906.
69. See E.T.Schell, "Youth and Hyckescorner; which came first?", Philological Quarterly XLV (1968), pp.468-74.
70. Hickscorner, ed. J.M.Manley, in Specimens of the Pre-Shakespearean Drama, New York, 1897, vol.I.
71. Everyman, ed. A.C.Cawley, Manchester, 1961, for references and the following quotations.
72. Le Morte Arthur, ll.97 ff.. For this, and all the following quotations from the romances, see Editions.
73. Ipomadon, ll. 6227 ff..
74. Sir Orfeo, ll.209 ff..
75. See Chapter 1, section (d), The Disguised Life , for a discussion of these romances.

76. See Chapter 1, section (e), The Identity Romances for relevant discussion.
77. Ibid., for a discussion of these names.
78. Ipomadon, 11.430 ff..
79. Guy of Warwick , 11.6177 f. and 6867 ff..
80. Ibid., 11.7398 ff..
81. For discussion on Sir Isumbras, see Chapter 1, section (a), iii, and section (d).
82. See Sir Isumbras, 11.508 ff..
83. See Magnificence , ed. R.L.Ramsay, E.E.T.S.e.s.98, London, 1908, 11. 2300 ff..
84. Ibid., 1.2562.
85. See Three Estates, ed. James Kinsley, London, 1954, 11.3500 ff..
86. Sir Isumbras; see Editions for this and the following quotations.
87. Sir Orfeo; see Editions for quotations.
88. For Mankind , see The Macro Plays, op.cit. (note 21).
89. For quotations from Robert of Sicily, see Editions.
90. Sir Gowther, 11.286 ff.. See Chapter 1, section (d), The Disguised Life.
91. Sir Degaré; see Editions for this and following quotations.
92. Sir Degaré is discussed in Chapter 1, section (e), The Identity Romances .
93. See the comparison of this passage with the story of Christina of Markyate in Chapter 3, Accounts of Disguise from the Historical Lives.
    For this quotation, see Sir Orfeo; Editions.
94. Ipomadon; for references, see Editions.
95. See Chapter 1, section (a), i, The Testing of Love for relevant discussion of Ipomadon.
96. See Chapter 1, esp. sections (a) and (d).
97. V.B.Richmond, The Popularity of the Middle English Romances, Ohio, 1975.
98. Dieter Mehl, The Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, London, 1968, pp.10 ff..

99. See Wickham's edition of The Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom in The English Moral Interludes, op.cit. (note 16), for references and quotations.

100. The Tale of Beryn, ll.2921 ff.. See Chapter 1, section (a), ii, The Nature of Society, for this episode.

101. See Chapter 1, sections (b) and (c), for discussions on these romances.

102. For references and quotations from Kyng Alisaunder, see Editions.

103. William of Palerne; see Editions . See also Chapter 1, section (b), The Comic Use of Disguise for a discussion of this episode.

104. Cf. Henry VI, Part III, Act III, Scene 2, ll.191 ff. for Gloucester's speech:

> I can add colours to the chameleon,
> Change shapes with Protheus for advantages,
> And set the murderous Machiavel to school.

105. William of Palerne, ll. 1729; see Editions.

106. Octavian(Northern). See Editions for the following quotation. See also Chapter 1, section (b), The Comic Use of Disguise, for the comic effects in Octavian .

107. Octavian (N), ll.889 ff., quoted fully in Chapter 1, section (b), op.cit..

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